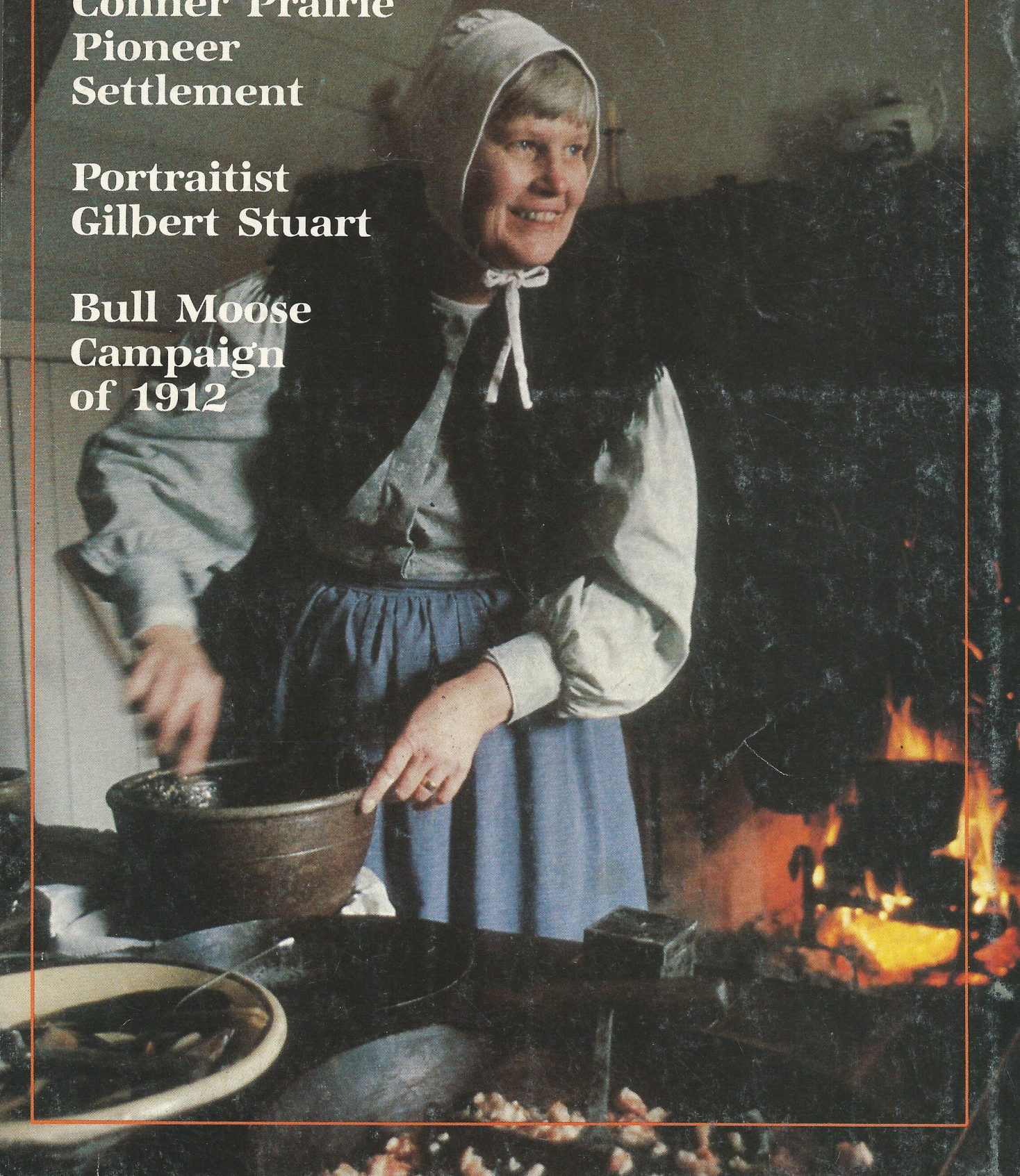


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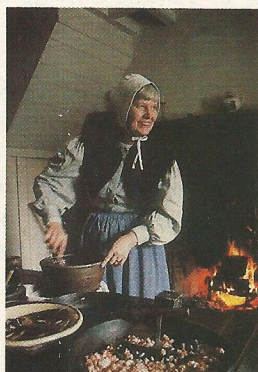
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Cover

Ruth Curtis, here preparing a meal for a community get-together, is the sister of blacksmith Ben Curtis in Prairietown, Indiana—a village where the year is always 1836. In the year 1984 she is Fran Benagh of Conner Prairie Pioneer Settlement—a living history museum where the past is recreated in first-person drama by interpreters who share their nineteenth-century day-to-day lives with visitors. An article on Conner Prairie appears on pages 34-39 of this issue.

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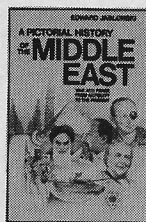
Several weeks ago, while house-hunting on the outskirts of Lancaster, Pennsylvania, my wife, daughters, and I happened across an inviting-looking collection of farm buildings, homes, shops, and other structures scattered across an expanse of tree- and field-covered acreage. "The Pennsylvania Farm Museum of Landis Valley," the sign said. Ready for an hour's diversion, we paid the modest entry fee, expecting to be back on our way by lunch time.

It was closing time, more than six hours later, when we reluctantly returned to the parking lot. During the interim we had watched demonstrations of early American spinning and weaving, learned something about the heritage of the Kentucky rifle (which actually came from Pennsylvania), toured working colonial-era and early-nineteenth-century farms, clambered over old steam machinery and admired vintage carriages and sleighs, watched a potter at work and listened to him philosophizing on the merits of old-time country living, and visited harness and print shops, a country store, a nineteenth-century seamstress's cottage, and a Victorian farm house. We had also gained a better appreciation for the Pennsylvania farm heritage than could have been achieved from any book or magazine.

The Pennsylvania Farm Museum is just one of dozens of "living history" sites that are scattered across the country today, from Old Salem, North Carolina, to Old San Diego, California. Spiritual descendants of the Colonial Williamsburg concept, they provide an unexcelled means of stepping back through time and learning about the customs, skills, hardships, and positive qualities of our forebears' world. An article on one of these—Indiana's Conner Prairie Pioneer Settlement—appears in this issue, and we'll be providing coverage on others regularly in the future. But experiencing the past is even better than reading about it, and I hope that you'll not pass up the opportunity of visiting a living history site in your area. Americans have never had a better way of learning about their past.

This is the last issue of *American History Illustrated* in which the name of assistant editor Kimberly A. Keefer will appear on the masthead. A staff member since early 1982, Kimberly is leaving for marriage and a continuing publishing career in New York or Philadelphia. Her passion for good, clear writing, and her attention to detail, have been of great benefit to past issues of the magazine. We wish her well.

Ed Holm
Editor



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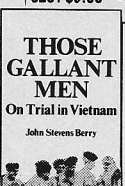
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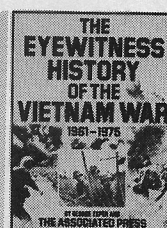


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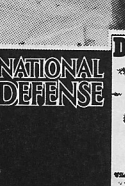
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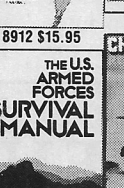
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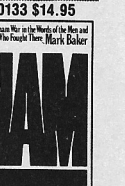
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America 1585: The Complete Drawings of John White, by Paul Hulton (*The University of North Carolina Press*, 1984; 213 pages, illustrated, \$24.95).

A unique look at America through the eyes of the ill-fated "Lost Colony's" governor, John White, comes to life in this magnificent collection of watercolors. Sent to America by Sir Walter Raleigh four hundred years ago, White painted America as he saw it, to introduce the New World to his contemporaries. Had it not been for White's careful documentation, the Roanoke voyages would remain largely a mystery today. All seventy-nine of White's surviving watercolors are featured in this volume, as well as a complete set of the Theodor de Bry engravings published in 1590 and the so-called Sloane copies of White's drawings. Although White's instructions prior to the Roanoke Voyages have not survived, his duties were probably similar to those of other explorer-artists of the period: "Drawe to lief one of each kinde of thing that is strange to us in England . . . all strange birdes beastes fishes plantes hearbes Trees and fruites . . . also the

figures & shapes of men and woemen in their apperell as also their manner of wepons in every place as you shall finde them differing." Now, for the first time, White's complete collection is available in this remarkable volume.

Flight in America, 1900-1983 From the Wrights to the Astronauts, by Roger E. Bilstein (*The Johns Hopkins University Press*, Baltimore, 1984; 356 pages, illustrated, \$32.50).

This generously illustrated volume traces the extraordinary history of aeronautics in America, from the barnstormers and crop dusters to the pilots of the space shuttle, from the first cross-continental flights to the current controversies about military uses of aerospace. Bilstein describes the transformation of virtually every aspect of American life following the development of flight, including the growth of aviation-related professions and the revolutions in industry and commerce during the age of flight. Over one hundred contemporary photographs offer readers a clear picture of flying machines and the people who created and flew them.

The Canoe: A History of the Craft from Panama to the Arctic by Kenneth G. Roberts and Philip Shakleton (*International Marine Publishing Company*, Camden, Maine, 1983; 279 pages, illustrated, \$50.00).

A coffee-table book in the most positive sense of the word, this large and expensive volume employs fine art, photography, and text to document the surprisingly complex history of the canoe from prehistoric times to the present. Ranging geographically from the dugout canoes of the Caribbean and Central America to the kayaks and umiaks of the far North, the book's definitive text and hundreds of illustrations explore the romance as well as the technology of one of man's most graceful and efficient means of transportation.

Our review of *Views of a Vanishing Frontier*, appearing on page 50 of the September issue, incorrectly named the University of Oklahoma Press as distributor for this catalog of the touring Maximilian/Bodmer exhibition. The University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln, is the distributor. We regret this error. ★

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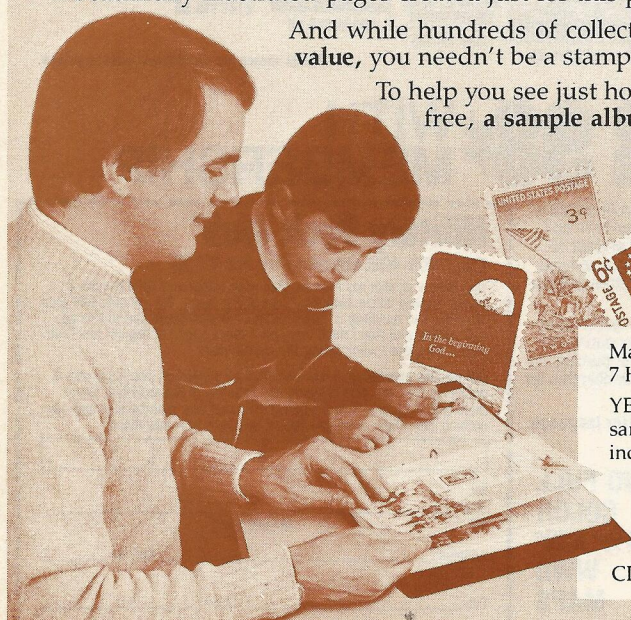
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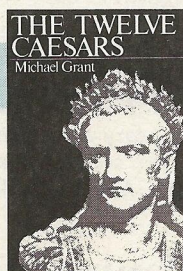
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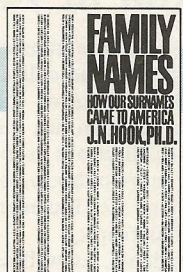
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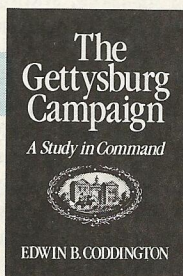
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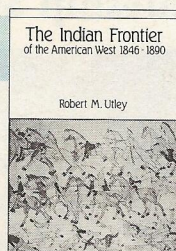
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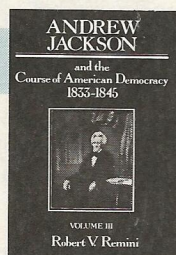
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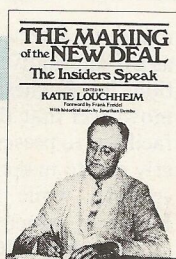
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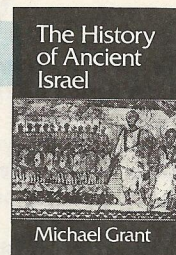
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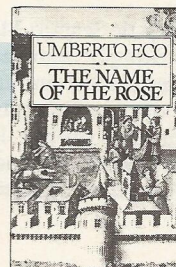
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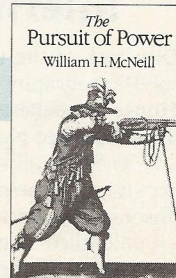
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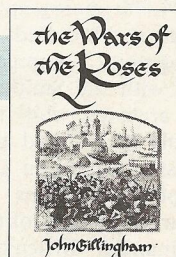
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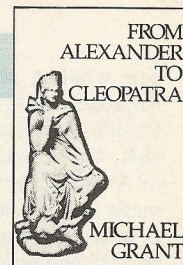
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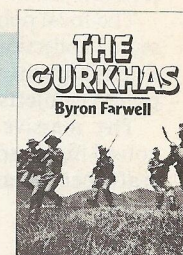
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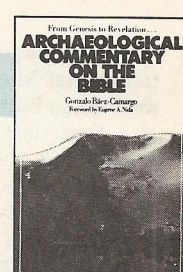
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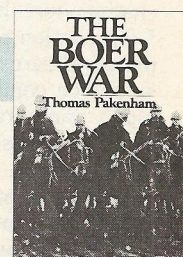
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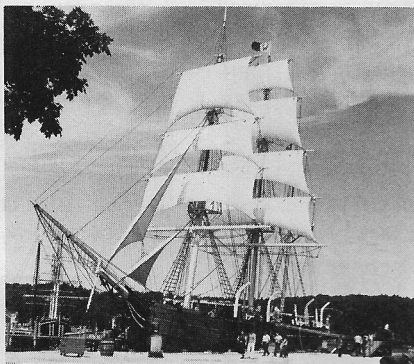
American History Today

Whaleship Morgan Restored

The whaling ship *Charles W. Morgan* rounded Cape Horn and cruised the Pacific Ocean on her maiden voyage in 1841. On May 12, 1984, the sole survivor of America's great wooden whaling fleet made another historic voyage—this one a half-mile-long—from the shipyard at Mystic Seaport, Connecticut, to Chubb's Wharf, completing fifteen years of restoration work.

The focal point of Mystic Seaport Museum's collections, the *Morgan* represents a commitment to collect, maintain, and preserve objects from our maritime past.

The massive restoration project involved highly specialized skills, as expert craftsmen repaired *Morgan's* hull, rig,



deck, and interior. Great care was taken to precisely duplicate her construction details; in 142 years afloat, *Morgan's* hull

had never previously been restored.

The most intensive part of the restoration began four years ago when the ship was removed from Chubb's Wharf and raised on the lift dock in the Seaport's Preservation Shipyard. Supported on the dry dock, the ship's deck was relaid, new planking and framing were installed both above and below the waterline, and some of the ship's major structural timbers were replaced. The vessel was then refloated in October 1983.

Home to more than one thousand whalers during her eighty years of active service, *Morgan* logged thirty-seven voyages, yielding 54,483 barrels of oil and 152,934 pounds of whalebone.

Transfer Planned for International Museum of Photography

When the Board of Directors of the International Museum of Photography at the George Eastman House in Rochester, New York, unexpectedly announced plans to negotiate transfer of its \$100 million photograph, motion picture, and camera collections to the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C., it unleashed a public uproar still reverberating nationwide.

If the controversial transfer is approved, the Rochester collection, including more than 500,000 photographs, 5,000 motion pictures, and hundreds of pieces of rare photographic equipment would be combined with the Smithsonian's photographic archives, while the Eastman House would be restored and maintained as an historic mansion and center for photographic exhibitions.

Following four years of analysis of the Eastman House's financial difficulties and lack of adequate storage facilities, the

museum's directors proposed the transfer as an alternative to keeping the collections in Rochester. Proponents of the move feel that the Smithsonian has the facilities to preserve the collections properly and to make them more publicly accessible, while relieving the Eastman House of impending bankruptcy.

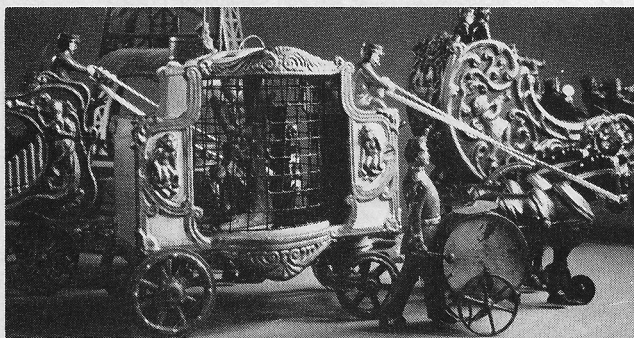
Many Rochester residents, as well as photographers, scholars, educators, historians, and collectors disagree, stating that the collections "put Rochester on the map," and that loss of the collections would have grave consequences for the community and for the photographic world. The loss would be substantial, they maintain, because the Eastman House is complimented and supplemented by many local photographic arts institutions, including the Rochester Institute of Technology, the University of Rochester, the Strong Museum, and other colleges and

libraries concentrated in an area long noted for photographic arts.

The Eastman House opened in 1949 and since that time has assembled one of the world's most significant collections of photography and photographic artifacts. Since its inception, it has received substantial contributions from Eastman Kodak—an estimated \$1 million annually.

While proponents of the transfer have estimated that as much as \$20 million would be needed to build proper storage facilities in Rochester, those opposed to the move counter that the estimates are seriously exaggerated and that the public has not been given an opportunity to raise funds for the ailing museum. However, it would take at least two years before any transfer could take place, providing time for antitransfer groups to propose alternatives to the move, or to raise funds to retain the collection in Rochester.

Next Month:



The Magic of Old-Time Toys

In this modern age of video games and mass-produced glamour dolls, the exquisite craftsmanship, beauty, and charm of yesterday's playthings continue to endure.

The Day the Japanese Bombed Washington

When Pearl Harbor was attacked on December 7, 1941, shock waves reverberated in the nation's capital no less than in Hawaii. Washington, D.C., would never be the same again.

Wings Over Otay

Convinced that man could glide like the birds, John Joseph Montgomery, "the father of basic flying," beat the Wright brothers into the skies in 1883.

Centennial of the Washington Monument

A century of misadventure plagued the Continental Congress' 1783 vision of an immortal monument to America's first president. In December the towering marble obelisk marks its one hundredth year of completion.

Oldest Airport Celebrates Seventy-Five Years of Aviation



College Park Airport, the nation's oldest continuous operation general aviation facility, is celebrating its seventy-fifth anniversary this year in conjunction with Maryland's 350th year of settlement.

The site of many aviation "firsts," College Park Airport, just east of Washington, D.C., was developed in 1909 when U.S. Army balloonist Lieutenant Frank Lahm pinpointed the acreage as an ideal location for army aircraft training. Shortly thereafter, Wilbur Wright began instructing military pilots there in the use of his newly developed "Wright Military Flyer." At College Park in October 1909, Mrs. Ralph Von Deman became the first woman in America to fly as a passenger, accompanying Wilbur Wright on a four-minute flight.

Other early accomplishments recorded at the airfield were initiation of America's first military cross-country flight; the first aerial photography flight; a then-world-record ascent to 6,450 feet by Lieutenant Henry "Hap" Arnold; the first air mail delivery; the first night landing; the first air-to-ground signal communications; and, in 1924, the first controlled helicopter flight by pioneer flyer Henry Berliner.

Following establishment of the U.S. Signal Corps Flying School at College Park in 1911, a number of civilian air operations were located at the airfield.

College Park Airport is now owned and operated by the Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission, which has enlisted the Baltimore office of Greiner Engineering to develop a comprehensive master plan to preserve the site while modernizing operations and planning for its future use.

The College Park airport museum is open from noon to 4 P.M. Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. For further information contact Catherine Wallace at (301) 779-2011.

Washington Monument Centennial

The Washington Monument celebrates its one-hundredth birthday next month. A memorial in honor of George Washington was first proposed by the new nation's Continental Congress in 1793.

The National Monument Society was founded in 1833 to carry out the project. Architect Robert Mills designed the original obelisk, and its 24,500-pound cornerstone was laid July 1, 1848. By 1854 the Monument had risen to a height of 154 feet when funds ran out, halting construction for twenty-five years. The federal government then took over the project, which army engineers completed on December 6, 1884.

Since October 9, 1888, when its doors opened to the public, some seventy million visitors have toured the Monument. Towering 555½ feet above Washington, D.C., it is the world's tallest masonry structure not dependent on a steel frame.

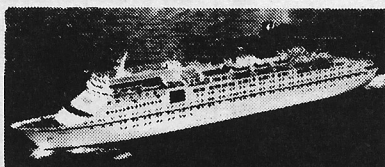
In conjunction with the centennial celebrations, the Monument grounds are receiving their first major rehabilitation since the turn of the century.

The Monument, under the administration of the National Park Service, is open seven days a week, from 9 A.M. to 5 P.M., with summer hours extended from 8 A.M. to midnight.

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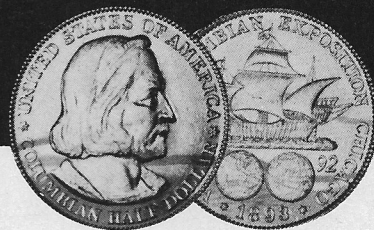
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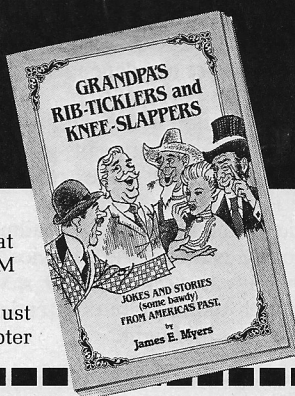
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Buttons

Continued from page 21

after rivaled pin-on devices in popularity until 1900. Political studs shaped like flags, shields, and campaign symbols were made of copper, brass, white metal, and porcelain. A few studs and badges bearing ferrotype portraits continued to be produced, but the paper photograph was fast replacing them as the most popular presidential portrait medium. Early paper photographs were of poor quality, but they were inexpensive and simple to make.

The log cabin returned to politics with the 1888 campaign of Republican candidate Benjamin Harrison, former Civil War general and grandson of the country's ninth president, who ran against incumbent president Cleveland. The election went to Harrison, whose candidacy was symbolized by "Grandfather's Hat." Many of Harrison's campaign pieces played on old William Henry Harrison slogans, substituting running mate Levi P. Morton in the familiar slogan, now "Tippecanoe and Morton too."

By the late 1880s, the brass clothing-type campaign button had reached its final decade of popularity. Buttons declaring allegiance to a particular party were common and featured early party symbols—a crowing rooster for the Democrats and a spread eagle for Republicans.

A new era began when the celluloid button was popularized in 1896, speeding the demise of clothing-style political buttons. This simple device consisted of a metal disk covered with a paper photograph and a thin piece of celluloid plastic. A spring-wire pin provided for attachment to the lapel. Although a few brass buttons and shell badges were issued that year, the new and inexpensive celluloid buttons were produced in great quantities and became widely accepted. By the turn of the century the long tradition of the brass political button, begun with Washington's inauguration more than a hundred years earlier, had ended. ★

David S. Ebersole is curator of Waterbury Companies' Button Museum and also is manager of engineering for the firm. He supervises the engraving and manufacture of embossing dies for all of the company's new designs and has lectured at seminars for button collectors.

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All the old crafts are alive and well in England.

Come with us to villages where the hatcher, potter, the smith, the artists and the woodworkers can still reveal their secrets of their trade. You'll visit the Wedgewood Factory, lunch on a canal boat! And you'll visit the honey-colored villages of the Cotswolds where working in wool is an ancient art. The "lost sunlight of centuries is still glimmering upon" these twisting country lanes. (J.B. Priestley)

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vided if needed. But, "the more anglers the less fun" say the British. So we're limited to only 8 couples. Non-fishers may go along or ride off in their own luxury mini-van with a driver/guide to explore the land of King Arthur, Wuthering Heights, and the French Lieutenant's Woman. Come cast your line with us in England's historic Southwest country.

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ASSEMBLY IN SHAKERTOWN May 28 — June 2, 1985

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LIFE IN OLD ENGLAND June 15-30, 1985

Whether you're a descendant of a Scottish clan chief, an English squire, or a Welsh miner; a noble duke, or a highwayman — or simply an enthusiastic Anglophile — here's a rare opportunity to savor the life in Old England. Start with a champagne reception and dinner with the Marquis of Hertford, and a special concert of 18th century music. You'll hear the language of Shakespeare at Stratford-on-Avon. Walk the medieval campus at Cambridge, enter Warwick Castle, ride a steam railway in Wales, Cross Lake Windermere, see where Vikings were quartered 1,000 years ago in York. Lastly, there's free time in London to enjoy its pageantry to your heart's content.

IRELAND AND SCOTLAND June 30 — July 14, 1985

Here is everything you could possibly want in one tour! Breathtaking beauty of landscape, great castles and rich farmland, Celtic mysticism, and good company. Enjoy a hearty farm breakfast after a night in an Irish farmhouse and a chance to talk farming. Sample the life of Cork, Killarney and Shannon. Shop for Waterford Crystal, Arran wool, and Belleek porcelain. Then on to Scotland to visit a distillery, talk with local craftsmen and men of the soil. See Inverness and the Great Glen. Follow the land of saints, scholars, and sportsmen to Edinburgh where you'll find great buys in bone china and Scottish crystal, woolsens, and antiques. Once you touch the sod of Ireland and Scotland, you'll never be the same again.

ENGLISH COUNTRY LIFE July 20 — August 4, 1985

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Military Tattoo! Then off to see an England most tourists miss: Experimental work in orchards and gardens, a visit to an English vineyard, a farm, a rose-growing nursery, an Alpine and Rock Plant Nursery Garden . . . plus demonstrations of fishing, shooting, dog handling, falconry and cooking . . . horse trials, sheepdog demonstrations, and time at the Royal Lancashire Agricultural Show.

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THREE HATS IN THE RING

Defeated at the 1912 Republican convention, Bull Moose candidate Theodore Roosevelt engaged his protégé William Howard Taft and Democratic challenger Woodrow Wilson in a no-holds-barred battle for the White House.

by David E. Johnson

In America in 1912 the automobile self-starter was introduced, suffragettes marched on New York City's Fifth Avenue, hard liquor was sold at six quarts for one dollar, Model T Fords abounded on the roads, no personal income tax depleted workers' wages, and the national debt stood at just eleven dollars per person. The year's best-selling novel was Zane Grey's *Riders of the Purple Sage*, and the popular songs were "Moonlight Bay," "Waiting for the *Robert E. Lee*," and Irving Berlin's "When the Midnight Choo Choo Leaves for Alabam." Sarah Bernhardt starred in *Queen Elizabeth*, the first feature-length motion picture shown in America; the Boston Red Sox moved into newly completed Fenway Park; the Indian head/buffalo nickel was issued; a heart attack was first diagnosed in a living patient; and the fourth down was added to football. It was also the year the *Titanic* sank and the year of an unmatched presidential campaign that saw incumbent Republican President William Howard Taft, ex-President Theodore Roosevelt, and future Democratic President Woodrow Wilson in a three-way battle for the White House.

In the language of the campaign, the presidential race was between a "rat," "the most cunning and adroit demagogue that modern civilization had produced since Napoleon III," and a "long-haired bookworm of a professor." The most colorful of these three contenders was powerful Teddy Roosevelt, who, to the dismay of Senator Mark Hanna, had become president upon the assassination of President William McKinley in 1901. "I told William McKinley it was a mistake to nominate that wild man at Philadelphia. . . ." said Hanna. "Now look! That damned cowboy is President of the United States!"

T.R. had used the presidency as a "bully pulpit" and had lashed out at the trusts and the "malefactors of great wealth." His motto was "Speak softly and carry a big stick," and he wielded his big stick freely. As he said of the building of the Panama Canal, "I took the Isthmus, started the Canal, and then left Congress — not to debate the Canal, but to debate me." He was an exciting presi-

dent and one of the few who seemed to relish the job. "No President has ever enjoyed himself as much as I have enjoyed myself," he said on leaving the office in 1909.

Roosevelt had been elected to his second term in 1904, the only successful Republican candidate since Lincoln who was not a Civil War army officer born in Ohio. But on election night after the results were in, T.R. made one of his few political mistakes. He said, "The wise custom which limits the President to two terms regards the substance and not the form, and under no circumstances will I be a candidate for or accept another nomination." He later admitted, "I would cut off my hand if I could recall that written statement."

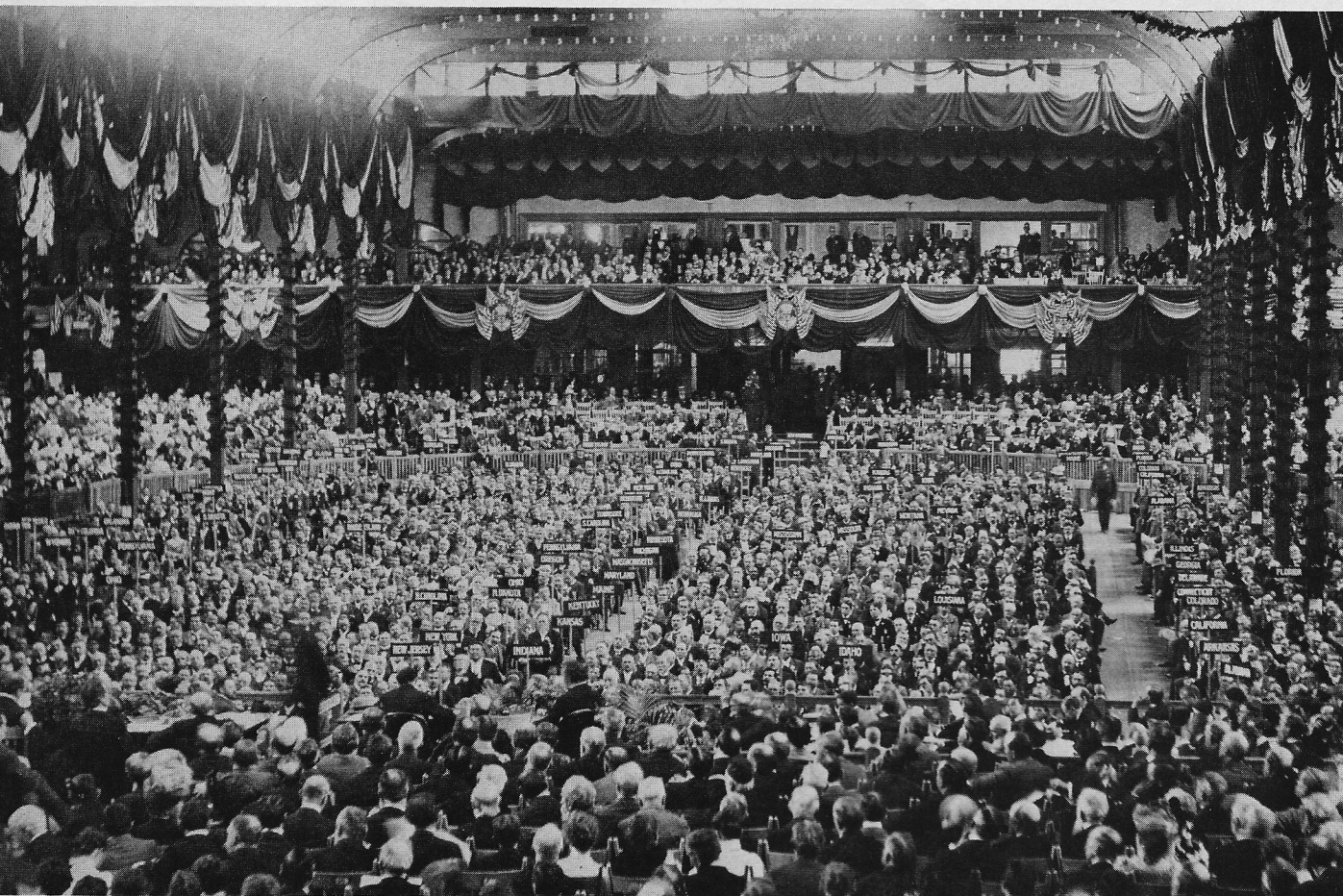
In contrast to T.R., Taft did not enjoy the presidency. "I have come to the conclusion," he once said, "that the major work of the President is to increase the gate receipts of expositions and fairs and bring tourists to town." When Roosevelt decided to make Taft his successor, he teased him by saying, "I have clairvoyant powers. I see a man standing before me weighing about three hundred and fifty pounds. There is something hanging over his head. . . . At one time it looks like the presidency — then again it looks like the chief justiceship." "Make it the Presidency," cried Mrs. Taft. "Make it the chief justiceship," said Taft.

At 330 pounds, Taft was the heaviest of all the presidents, and his weight was the butt of many jokes. A Supreme Court justice said that Taft was "the politest man alive. I heard that recently he rose in a streetcar and gave his seat to three women." Senator Jonathan Dolliver of Iowa said, in criticizing Taft's presidency, that he was "a large body surrounded by men who knew exactly what

Preferring politics to big-game hunting, and disillusioned with the performance of his hand-picked successor, ex-president Theodore Roosevelt (right) simultaneously reentered the arena and coined a phrase in 1912: "My hat is in the ring," he declared.



A reporter's assessment of the Republican convention: "The only question now is which corpse gets the flowers."



BROWN BROTHERS, STERLING, PENNSYLVANIA

Outmaneuvered by Taft at the Republican convention (above), Roosevelt decided to run as a third-party candidate.

they wanted." Despite the jokes about him and his reluctance to be president, Taft was elected in 1908 with T.R.'s help. On inaugural day Washington, D.C., experienced one of the nastiest blizzards in its history, prompting Taft to say to Roosevelt, "I always said it would be a cold day when I got to be President of the United States."

The third candidate of 1912, Woodrow Wilson, had his first experience in politics in 1860. "I was," Wilson said, "standing at my father's gateway . . . when I was four years old, and [heard] someone pass and say that Mr. Lincoln was elected and there was to be war." Wilson's first love was politics, but he took his doctorate and by 1890 had settled down to a professor's life at Princeton. When he finally decided to take up politics, his rise was phenomenal. In September 1910, he had been a college president who had never held a public office, and on March 4, 1913, he was president of the United States.

Theodore Roosevelt was only fifty years old when he turned over the presidency to Taft. He was at the height of his popularity and could easily have had the third term that he so badly wanted if it had not been for his rash promise not to run again.⁶ To drown his sorrows

at leaving the office, he plunged into the rough-and-tumble life of the outdoors. By 1910, however, he was having second thoughts about Taft. Either Roosevelt again wanted the office for himself, as his foes suggested, or he genuinely thought Taft was a mistake as president.

Taft was at a loss to understand Roosevelt's increasing hostility toward him. He had tried to please T.R. in everything he did and, indeed, to keep himself in Roosevelt's shadow. "When someone addresses Taft as 'Mr. President,'" a wag said, "he instinctively turns around to see where Roosevelt is." Nevertheless, relations between the two continued to deteriorate, and finally, upon his return from an African big game hunt in 1912, Roosevelt announced his candidacy by coining the expression, "My hat is in the ring." He explained that his earlier promise not to seek a third term meant no third *consecutive* term.

At first Taft was genuinely grieved at T.R.'s break with him, sorrowfully claiming that Roosevelt had been his closest friend. But as Roosevelt continued to attack him as disloyal and guilty of "the grossest and most astounding hypocrisy," he decided that he had reached his limit. "I have been a man of straw long enough," Taft told the

**Wilson adopted the strategy of Napoleon:
“Don’t interfere when your enemy is destroying himself.”**

BROWN BROTHERS. STERLING, PENNSYLVANIA



Democrat Woodrow Wilson campaigned vigorously but pretended to take little notice of the Taft-Roosevelt feud.

New York Times. “Even a rat in a corner will fight!”

Taft controlled the party machinery, but presidential primaries were being held in 1912 for the first time in history, and T.R. used them to get delegates. By then Taft was resolved to keep Roosevelt from ever becoming president again, and he fought hard in the primaries. But a president who had called himself a man of straw and had compared himself with a cornered rat could not arouse the voters’ enthusiasm. This was especially true when he had an opponent such as Roosevelt, who kept reminding the voters that Taft was not only a rat in a corner but a fat, sweating rat in a corner, at that. For good measure, T.R. added that Taft was a hypocrite, a promoter of fraud, an ingrate who bites the hand that feeds him, and a man “with brains of about three guinea-pig power.” The results were predictable. Roosevelt won 278 delegates in the primaries to Taft’s 48.

The nomination, however, was another matter. The Republican convention was held in Chicago on June 18, but the nomination was decided before the delegates convened. Taft’s supporters dominated the National Committee, which ruled on the seating of the delegates. In one credentials fight after another the committee ruled

in favor of Taft. “There is no form of rascality which the Taft men have not resorted to,” thundered T.R. to the press, but it did him no good. When the convention opened, Taft had 566 delegates, with only 540 needed for nomination, and Roosevelt had 466.

To counter what he called the steamroller tactics of the Taft men—using another term coined in 1912—Roosevelt personally came to the convention. “It is a fight against theft—and the thieves will not win,” he roared. Newspapermen asked if he was set for a tough fight. Did he welcome it? Was he in shape for it? “I feel fine,” T.R. said. “I’m feeling like a bull moose!” And thus the name of the campaign was determined.

At the convention, on one vote after another, the Taft delegates were seated, while the Bull Moosers whistled “Toot, Toot!” and rubbed sandpaper together in imitation of the sound of a steamroller. “We stand at Armageddon, and we battle for the Lord,” screamed Roosevelt. In spite of the stolen delegates, the issue was in doubt until the end. Taft’s men said they had a majority of forty, and T.R.’s supporters said they had a majority of forty. “That means,” explained ex-Senator Chauncey

Roosevelt's speeches resembled those "Custer might have made to his scouts when he saw the Indians coming."



THE BETTMANN ARCHIVE

Roosevelt's "Bull Moose" campaign had an air of desperation, for he realized he could beat Taft but not Wilson.

Depew, "that there are at least eighty liars in the convention."

Warren G. Harding gave the nominating speech for Taft, calling him "the greatest progressive of the age," which must have infuriated Roosevelt. When Harding's speech was over, the voting began. By this time it was clear that Taft would win, so T.R. instructed his delegates not to participate. The result of the first ballot favored Taft with 561 votes (enough to win); Roosevelt received 107, and 344 delegates were "present and not voting." The verdict pronounced to a reporter was, "The only question now is which corpse gets the flowers."

The Democratic convention was held a week later in Baltimore, Maryland. A big question was whether William Jennings Bryan would be a candidate. Democratic National Committee chairman Norman E. Mack answered simply, "While life lasts."

The two chief contenders, however, were Senator Champ Clark of Missouri and Woodrow Wilson, who had moved from the groves of academe to the governorship of New Jersey. Clark was derided as the "patent medicine man" because he had signed a testimonial for "Electric Bitters," saying "It seemed that all the organs

in my body were out of order, but three bottles of Electric Bitters made me all right." He was also ridiculed for the song his followers sang at rallies. The old "houn' dawg" song ended with the chorus: "I doan' keer if he is a houn', You gotta quit kickin' my dawg aroun!"

Wilson, of course, was a long-haired professor with no business in politics. Not much more seemed necessary to add.

The New York *World* "had hoped that it would not be necessary to treat Mr. Clark's candidacy seriously." As ballot after ballot was taken, however, it was decided that Mr. Clark was a serious candidate since he led by increasing margins on every one. On the tenth ballot, thanks to ninety votes from New York, Champ, in fact, had a majority. Two-thirds of the delegates were necessary for nomination, but no candidate who reached a majority had ever failed to go on to the nomination.

At this point Bryan changed his vote from Clark to Wilson on the grounds that New York's vote proved Clark was not a progressive. Some said it proved he might win before a deadlock could develop to result in Bryan's nomination. This slowed the Clark bandwagon somewhat, but it still took thirty-six more ballots to defeat him. Wilson

Taft was pleased with the outcome. He was out of the White House, which he hated, and Roosevelt was not in it.

CHICAGO HISTORICAL SOCIETY



Reflecting his relief upon leaving politics, a genial Taft accompanied Wilson at the latter's 1913 inaugural parade.

was chosen on the forty-sixth ballot. It was predestination, said the Presbyterian Wilson. "God ordained that I should be the next President of the United States," he said to his astonished party chairman, who had expected to get some credit for it himself.

The convention selected for vice president, Governor Thomas R. Marshall of Indiana, whose fame rests on his assertion that "what this country needs is a really good five-cent cigar."

Still not willing to accept defeat and leave the political arena, Roosevelt and his group split from the Republicans and formed a new third party. The group called themselves the Progressive party and held their convention in August. Roosevelt was nominated, to no one's surprise, and in his acceptance speech he declared that 1912 was the year in which the people had their chance to destroy the "rotting husks," otherwise known as the Republican and Democratic parties. The Democrats, he had said earlier, were "as stupid, bourbon and reactionary as ever before." To suggestions that the Progressives compromise with the Republicans to keep out the hated Democrats, T.R. replied, "I hold that Mr. Taft stole the

nomination, and I do not feel like arbitrating with a pickpocket as to whether or not he shall keep my watch."

Author John Allen Gable has called the Bull Moose platform "Roosevelt's Confession of Faith." Amos Pinchot said it contained everything "from the shorter catechism to how to build a birchbark canoe." The *New York Times* criticized the platform as a socialist document and sympathized with Eugene Debs, the candidate of still another party (the Socialists) who, after the Progressive raid, had only "one university professor hereabout" still faithful to his cause.

The issues in the campaign focused on the big trusts and the high cost of living. Beef had not been so expensive in thirty years. At seventeen cents per pound, it was difficult for the average worker to buy with wages of two dollars per day. The Republicans promised the full dinner pail and the Democrats promised tariff reform and new labor laws. Taft campaigned very little, figuring that he could not win but that he could keep Roosevelt from winning, which was his greatest hope. He was sorry that the Democrats would take the election "but the fear of Mr. Roosevelt's success made it necessary" to campaign.

Continued on page 49



A unique collection of Americana documents the long history
and fascinating origins of

Political Buttons

by David S. Ebersole

It is difficult to imagine an election without buttons and banners, hats and posters, songs and slogans, parades and rallies. In fact, American presidential candidates have almost always relied on campaign tools which have evolved along with the nation's changing political traditions.

The ubiquitous button, the item perhaps most associated with political Americana, has a heritage that spans the entire history of electioneering in the United States. A unique collection of antique political buttons has been preserved at the Waterbury Companies Button Museum in Waterbury, Connecticut; in viewing it one can trace not only the development of this campaign fixture but can also sense the drama of elections long past—dark horses and third parties, presidential ambitions that were realized, and others that failed.

The earliest political buttons were functional, fastening men's breeches, waistcoats, and overcoats. These copper or brass disks were either cast to shape as a single piece, or stamped

out with the desired design and a wire button loop attached.

The first such buttons commemorated George Washington's inauguration as the first American president. Some twenty-seven varieties dating from Washington's 1789 inauguration and first term of office have been identified. Typical button designs include a "GW" monogram encircled by the legend "LONG LIVE THE PRESIDENT" and a chain of thirteen links, each containing the abbreviation of one of the original colonies; and an eagle with rayed sun above and the encircling legend "MEMORABLE ERA MARCH THE FOURTH 1789."

These designs represented popular colonial emblems. The "Colonial Circle," for example, symbolizing the thirteen united colonies, appeared on Continental currency as early as 1776, and even on a set of china given to Martha Washington. Sun rays illuminating the eagle express the majesty, strength, and power of an extraordinary leader. The rising sun also alludes to the rising empire of which Washington was president. Shortly before his inauguration, a toast in Washington's honor declared, "May the sun rise to him many, many years and every year Hail him, like many past, The Father of his Country." "Long Live the President" suggests former colonists' familiarity with terms of royalty and the extent to which Washington was deified by his countrymen.

The Revolutionary War hero answered his nation's call to the presidency without benefit of primaries, nominating conventions, or campaigning. No candidates opposed him. The newly-created Electoral Col-

lege's sixty-nine members all voted for him.

Washington appeared at his inauguration clad in a brown broadcloth suit adorned with gilt buttons bearing spread eagles. The buttons were presented to him as an inaugural gift by General Henry Knox, first secretary of war, who had commissioned engraver William Rollison to craft them. Washington wrote to Knox to express his appreciation for the gift, and requested six more buttons.

Between 1796 and 1824, candidates for president and vice president were nominated by congressional caucus—secret meetings of senators and representatives. Electioneering methods underwent little change during this period, and campaigning was largely limited to the use of newspapers, pamphlets, and oratory. The few political buttons produced were either commemoratives honoring a candidate's nomination or inauguration, or criticizing his leadership.

The "eagle and glory" button, worn as an anti-administration gesture during John Adams' presidency, bore a Federal-style eagle surmounted by clouds and thirteen stars—with the eagle facing right rather than left, a subtle rebuke.

Medalets—coin-type political disks related to buttons—also were first produced as commemoratives and later as campaign tokens. Manufactured from various metals, they sometimes had a hole near the upper rim for suspension from the lapel. Medalets began appearing in America in the late 1790s, and enjoyed a long reign as the most popular campaign pieces until the late nineteenth century, when celluloid buttons overtook them in popularity.

The ancestor of the modern campaign button was utilitarian in nature. These nineteenth-century brass political buttons from the collection of the Waterbury Companies Button Museum were actually worn as parts of clothing. Items of particular interest include an 1829 "back name" inaugural button for Andrew Jackson (center foreground), an 1840 William Henry Harrison campaign button featuring a log cabin and barrel of cider (center), and a particularly well-crafted gilt button for Henry Clay's 1844 campaign (upper center).



PHOTOGRAPH BY RICARDO SALAS, COURTESY OF THE WATERBURY COMPANIES MUSEUM

The introduction of the ferrotype process during the 1850s made photographic campaign buttons practical. As many as thirty-six images were fixed on a thin iron sheet, and the individual buttons were then cut free.

The first buttons actually used for campaigning were made for the election of Andrew Jackson, the seventh American president. The faces of these small, one-piece brass buttons with loop shanks were generally plain, though a few featured a military-style bust of Jackson on the front. A political message or slogan, such as “Andrew Jackson, March 4, 1829,” was stamped on the back of each. These “back-name” buttons were generally abandoned in later campaigns, as more elaborate buttons with artfully engraved symbols and slogans gained favor.

A hero of the Battle of New Orleans in the War of 1812, Jackson first ran for the presidency in 1824. Although he won more popular votes than opponents John Quincy Adams, William Crawford, and Henry Clay, none gained the necessary electoral majority, so the election went to the House of Representatives, where Jackson was defeated when Clay threw his support to Adams.

Jackson supporters viewed the subsequent 1828 election as a monumental battle, not only between candidates, but between the aristocratic ruling class (represented by the Adams administration) and the democratic self-government of the “common man” (represented by Jackson). It was the first election year in which the common man could vote directly

for presidential electors, and changes in suffrage laws in most states increased the number of voters; appealing to the masses became paramount. Jackson’s campaign workers, called “Hurrah Boys,” made up slogans and political songs, organized parades, barbeques, and street rallies, and distributed hickory brooms, canes, sticks, ribbons, brass buttons, and household gadgets to attract votes. Following a campaign noted for mudslinging on both sides, Jackson won by a landslide.

The boisterous 1840 presidential contest between Whig candidate William Henry Harrison and Democrat Martin Van Buren spawned the greatest array of campaign paraphernalia for any election up to that time. More than fifty pro-Harrison—and considerably fewer Van Buren—buttons were manufactured.

The Whig convention selected Harrison, hailed as the hero of the Indian battle at Tippecanoe, as a “compromise” candidate, naming John Tyler for vice president—hence the slogan “Tippecanoe and Tyler too.” Harrison’s managers transformed him into a simple log-cabin frontiersman pitted against the New York aristocrat (Van Buren) living amid the splendor and luxuries of the White House, playing down Harrison’s true background as a college graduate, army major-general, congressman,

and senator. Log cabin headquarters, log cabin newspapers and pamphlets, log cabin sunbonnets, sashes, jewelry, handkerchiefs, teacups and plates, Tippecanoe tobacco and shaving soap, and log cabin badges and buttons dominated the campaign.

Only a few buttons promoted Van Buren and the Democratic party with its serious slogans such as “Our Principles are Justice and Equality,” and “A Uniform and Sound Currency.” One rare specimen depicts Justice holding scales and a staff, next to an eagle clasping a key in its talons while perched on a safe—all symbolizing opposition to a national bank.

More Americans cast their votes than in any previous presidential contest, electing Harrison by a landslide. Ironically, the sixty-eight-year-old president contracted pneumonia while delivering the longest inaugural address in history, and died one month later. Tyler became the first American president by succession.

A gilt button promoting Henry Clay’s third presidential campaign in 1844 immortalizes the eminent statesman whose remarkable political career spanned several decades. His Democratic opponent that year, America’s first “dark horse” candidate was the relatively unknown James K. Polk.

Several Whig party buttons bore likenesses of Clay, often showing him

clad in a Greek toga and laurel-leaf wreath. Engraved with elaborately ornamented borders, they resemble fine gold pieces.

In contrast, the Democrats, rankled by the deluge of log cabin and hard cider campaign motifs used in the election of William Henry Harrison, put a plank in their party platform condemning “factitious symbols” and “displays and appeals insulting to the judgments and subversive to the intellect of the people.” Understandably, few pieces were issued for the party that year.

The presidential election of 1860 was marked by the unusual number of candidates on the ballot (including Stephen A. Douglas, John C. Breckinridge, and Abraham Lincoln), and by the first widespread use of the photographic campaign button.

As early as 1848 daguerreotype photographs had been used for campaign portraits of Zachary Taylor, Millard Fillmore, and Lewis Cass. A subsequent photographic development, the ambrotype, was also used in several election campaigns. However, both of these processes were time-consuming, and the number of campaign pieces that could be produced was limited.

Mass production of pictorial buttons became possible during the 1850s with the introduction of the ferrotype process, more commonly referred to as the tintype. Its name was derived from the thin iron plate which, when coated with wet collodian and exposed, produced a fixed photograph. The quality of ferrotypes was uneven—whites came out gray and the range of contrasts was limited—but large numbers of images could easily be made by copying a master portrait with a multi-lens camera. As many as thirty-six ferrotype portraits were produced on a single sheet and then cut apart. Buttons bearing likenesses of both the presidential and vice-presidential candidates, side by side, were known as jugates.

The ferrotype portrait was encased in a brass rim and backed with a shank to form a clothing-type button, or backed with a pin-type attachment for wearing on the lapel. During the 1864 and later campaigns, ferrotypes were also set in frames embossed with elaborate Victorian-style patriotic

Waterbury—172 Years of Buttons

Many of the nineteenth-century campaign buttons in the Waterbury Companies museum collection—focus of the accompanying article—came from the firm’s own manufacturing facility. Among the oldest continuously-operating companies in America, Waterbury has been manufacturing buttons since 1812, when Aaron Benedict began making buttons for U.S. military uniforms. With the brass supply from England cut off during this period, Benedict purchased kettles and other domestic utensils for raw materials, working in a factory powered by an overshot water wheel.

During the Civil War the Waterbury Companies provided uniform buttons for both the Union and Confederate armies, supplying the Confederacy primarily through its British contacts. The firm has been a major supplier of military buttons during two world wars, and although its operations are diversified today, buttons continue to be a major product.

The Waterbury Companies Button Museum in Waterbury, Connecticut, features political, historical, and uniform buttons of many types, and includes a pewter infantry button believed to be made from the firm’s first order for the U.S. Government in 1812, and commemorative buttons made for George Washington’s inauguration in 1789. The museum is open by appointment: telephone David Ebersole at (203) 756-5551.

motifs such as spread eagles, scrolls, and shields. Known as shell badges, these campaign pieces were backed by stickpins, clasps, or pinbacks for lapel attachment. Other badges were constructed by placing ferrotype portraits of the presidential and vice-presidential candidates back to back and encasing them in a brass rim with a hole for a ribbon, so that they could be fastened to a coat lapel.

The introduction of the presidential photographic button provided a means of familiarizing the masses with the candidate’s appearance, making it a valuable campaign tool. The pictorial button was especially important in making Abraham Lincoln known to voters. At least half a dozen different poses of him are found on campaign artifacts. Ferrotypes of Lincoln can be dated by whether or not he is shown wearing a beard: beardless pictures date the pieces from the 1860 campaign; those retouched to include a beard, or photographs picturing Lincoln in full beard, date from the 1864 campaign.

In addition to buttons and badges, many varied medalets and tokens were issued in support of both Lincoln and his 1864 Democratic opponent George B. McClellan. Because of a shortage of copper pennies during the Civil War, these “Civil War tokens” were often accepted by businesses as substitutes for official currency.

The use of political ferrotypes increased during Republican Ulysses S.

Grant’s campaigns against Horatio Seymour in 1868 and Horace Greeley in 1872. Medal and token makers struck many likenesses of the popular general and his military triumphs. Opponent Seymour’s candidacy received a fair amount of attention from medal manufacturers because of his popularity in New York, where many of the engravers were located.

Grant was victorious in 1868 and again in 1872 when his Civil War hero image was resurrected by the Republican party, boosting the living legend back into the White House for a second term. Political pieces from 1868 were reissued for the re-election campaign—a common practice during second-term campaigns.

A colorful, influential American figure for more than sixty years was James Gillespie Blaine, whose career was highlighted by his campaign against Democrat Grover Cleveland in 1884, when the “Plumed Knight” finally received the Republican presidential nomination after two previous attempts. A splinter reform group bolted the party and eventually endorsed Cleveland. The ensuing battle, fraught with vicious personal attacks and counterattacks, paved the way for an abundance of buttons and other electioneering articles featuring many imaginative designs. One brass clothing-type button depicted Blaine as an armored knight in a plumed helmet.

A lapel ornament called a stud also appeared that year, and studs there-

Continued on page 10

GILBERT STUART

Renegade Portraitist

The most acclaimed portrait painter of his day, this brilliant but flawed artist was the worst enemy of his own success.

by Paul Rosta

It has been said that if George Washington returned to earth and did not resemble the portrait painted by Gilbert Stuart, the first president would be denounced as an imposter. For almost two centuries, Stuart's second life portrait has fixed the popular image of Washington. But Washington was only the most famous of Stuart's subjects. Presidents and prime ministers, generals and merchants, nobles and fashionable people, were all captured by his brush.

Stuart's talent acquainted him with many early American leaders, including the first six presidents. In England and Ireland, as well as the United States, Stuart was hailed as the greatest portrait painter of his time. He achieved his greatness in spite of his weaknesses. Self-indulgent, vain, and devious, Stuart was the worst enemy of his own success.

Gilbert Charles Stuart was born near Newport, Rhode Island, on December 3, 1755. His father, a snuffmaker, had emigrated from Scotland several years before, and Stuart liked to explain his fondness for snuff by pointing out that he was born in his father's snuff mill. Stuart's friend Benjamin Waterhouse remembered the young Gilbert as "a very capable, self-willed boy who, perhaps on that account, was indulged in everything, being an only son, handsome and forward and habituated at home to having his own way in everything."

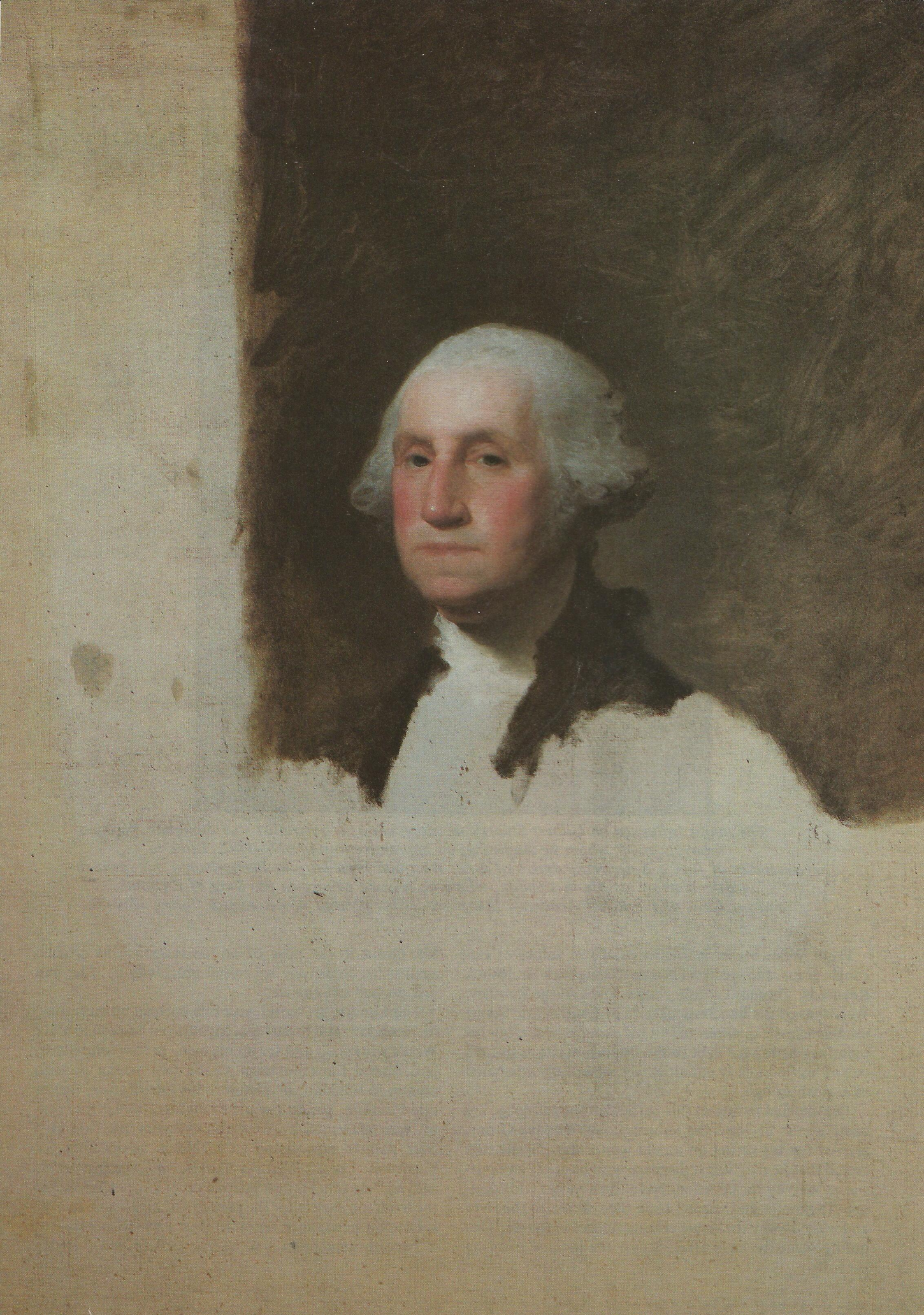
Stuart's early attempts at painting prompted the family doctor to introduce the boy to Cosmo Alexander, a traveling Scottish painter. Alexander took on the boy as an assistant and student, and in 1770 Stuart accompanied Alexander on his return to Scotland. At that time, young colonial artists could find much better instruction in Europe than at home. The journey ended in disaster when Alexander died suddenly in August 1772. Far from home, without friends or the means to support himself, Stuart had to work his way home on a coal ship. Afterward,

he was always reluctant to talk about the hardships he had suffered.

By late summer of 1775, Stuart had summoned up enough confidence to make a trip to England. Benjamin Waterhouse had gone ahead of him to study medicine, and Stuart counted on his friend to help him find his way in London. When he arrived, Stuart learned that Waterhouse had already left the city to study in Edinburgh. Once again, Stuart found himself alone and friendless in a strange land, and he sank into despair. Waterhouse's return to London restored his spirits, but the uncertainty of the portrait painter's life caused violent swings of mood. "With Stuart," Waterhouse recalled, "it was either high tide or low tide."

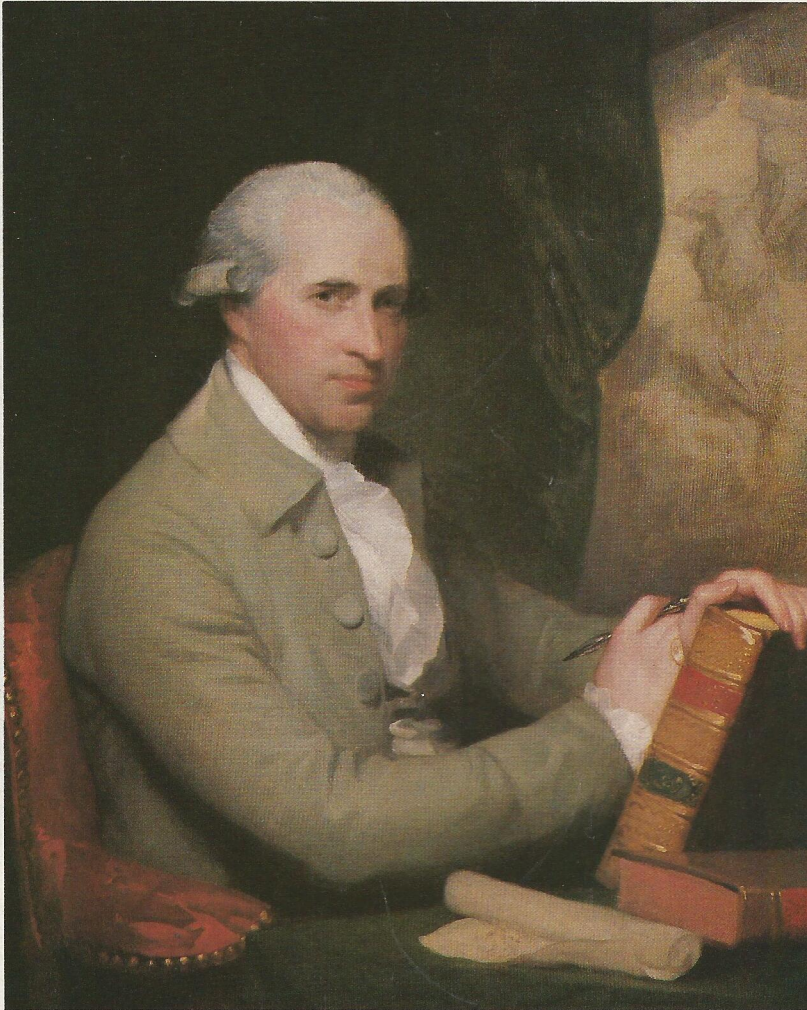
Waterhouse helped Stuart in many ways, but the medical student's greatest favor was to secure the young painter an introduction to Benjamin West. Born in Pennsylvania, West had settled in England, where he became one of the chief painters to King George III. An industrious, kindly Quaker, West offered employment and instruction to many young American artists. After several cordial meetings with West, Stuart sent a note appealing for help. He wrote that he was "destitute of the means of acquiring knowledge," and was "pitching headlong into misery." West responded by hiring Stuart as an assistant, and then took him on as a student.

Gilbert Stuart's second life portrait of George Washington—probably his most famous painting and the most familiar likeness of the first American president—reflects both the artist's genius and his duplicity. Stuart's failure to complete the 1796 painting was a deliberate ruse, enabling him to retain it as a model for the many commissions he received for portraits of Washington. (Stuart is known to have made more than fifty copies of this picture.)



From Benjamin West, Stuart learned the artistic values of elegance, grace, and idealized beauty.

BY COURTESY OF THE NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY, LONDON



The major influence on Gilbert Stuart's development as a portraitist was Benjamin West (above), under whom he studied as an apprentice during 1777–1782. Tutor to a number of future American painters of note, West had been born in Pennsylvania but spent the greater part of his life in London, where he became painter to the King of England and president of the Royal Academy. Stuart made this portrait of his mentor during 1780–81.

From West, Stuart learned the artistic values of elegance, grace, and idealized beauty. Along with Sir Joshua Reynolds, Thomas Gainsborough, and George Romney, West shaped the neoclassical style of English art. Stuart used neoclassic qualities to suit his own purposes, but his paintings betray his debt to the English masters; in 1878 one of his finest early paintings was mistakenly attributed to Gainsborough.

The unusual setting of this particular portrait (page 25) came about because the subject, one William Grant, arrived for his sitting on a cold winter day. Grant suggested that he and Stuart dispense with business and pursue an activity far better suited to the weather—ice skating. So painter and subject took their skates to the river and whiled away the hours cutting figures in the ice. This outing seems to have given Stuart the idea of painting

Mr. Grant in the pose of an ice skater, arms crossed against his chest, one leg raised gracefully as if he had just pushed off the ice.

The London art world gave this portrait an enthusiastic reception, and Stuart was encouraged enough to leave West's workshop and set up his own. Before long Stuart had earned the reputation as the best young portrait painter in England. In a letter to his grandfather, Benjamin Franklin, young Temple Franklin reported that Stuart was "esteemed by West and everyone the first portrait painter now living . . . He is astonishing for likenesses. I heard West say 'that he *nails* the face to the canvas.'" At times Stuart's depiction of a face approached the truth too closely for the pleasure of his clients. In 1782 a London newspaper reported that a Stuart portrait of a Swedish gentleman was "a fine picture and a strong



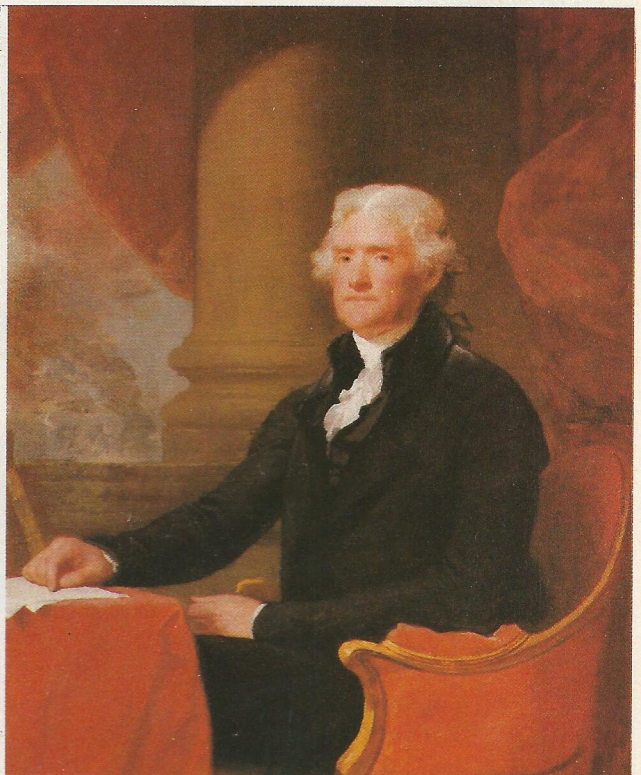
Stuart's unusual portrait of skater William Grant created a sensation at the Royal Academy in 1782, assuring the artist of future commissions and prompting him to leave Benjamin West's studio. Although Stuart later was seldom successful with full-length portraits, in this painting he proved to be at the height of his form.

Painter of the first six American presidents...and

NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART, SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION



BOWDOIN COLLEGE MUSEUM OF ART, BRUNSWICK, MAINE



Stuart's skills as a portraitist brought him rapid recognition following his return to America in 1793. His patrons included the first six presidents; the 1825-26 likeness of former president John Adams (above left), although painted in the twilight of the artist's life, still reflects his mastery of light and character. The portrait of Thomas Jefferson (above right) dates from 1805-07.

likeness," but added, "If we are not mistaken, the original would not like to carry the original of himself back to Sweden."

One of Stuart's secrets was that he used a different method of painting than did other portraitists of the day. Instead of drawing a face and adding color later, Stuart applied color directly to the canvas. His perception of the way light and color fell on the structure of the face allowed him to recreate a person's appearance. Even his flesh tones were remarkably lifelike. As Benjamin West said, "It's of no use to steal Stuart's colors. If you want to paint as he does you must steal his eyes." Through carelessness or indifference, Stuart often neglected parts of the portrait other than the face and head. One report stated that the artist "made a tolerable likeness of a face, but as to the figure, he could not get below the fifth button."

If Stuart's talent won him customers, his wit and manners must have helped him keep them. At work and at leisure, Stuart was a favorite among his wealthy and aristocratic patrons. While he was painting, he would entertain his sitters by chatting with them about their professions or pastimes. With fame and success came self-indulgence. Stuart liked to surround himself with the best food, drink, clothing, and snuff. Even the best young

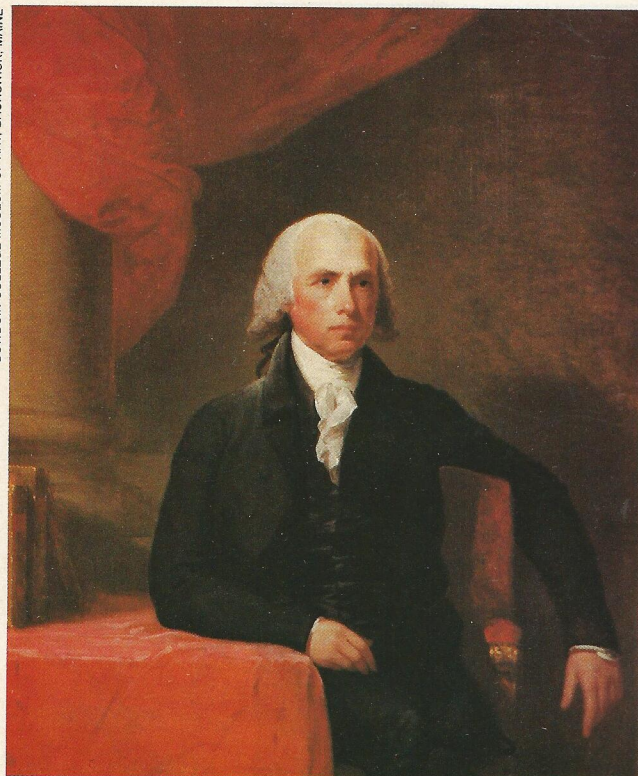
portrait painter could not afford to live like his patrons, and Stuart soon fell into his lifelong habit of running up debts. Family responsibilities did not change Stuart's ways. In May 1786, Stuart married pretty eighteen-year-old Charlotte Coates, who was twelve years the painter's junior. Several months later, Mrs. Stuart gave birth to a son. The marriage and the child were not two years old when Stuart slipped out of London and headed for Dublin. Stuart did escape his debts, which supposedly included eighty pounds for snuff alone. But he also abandoned the chance for a career as one of England's great artists.

In Dublin, Stuart became the favorite painter of the politicians and the aristocrats. The profits from his work enabled him to purchase a farm for his family. He painted many fine portraits during his Irish period, and also developed a way to hoodwink his customers. At the first sitting for a portrait, Stuart would demand half his fee, and then fail to finish the work. Even this ruse could not keep Stuart out of debt, and he may have spent time in debtor's prison. After six years in Ireland, Stuart decided to flee his creditors a second time. His best prospects seemed to be in his native land, so he and his family quietly departed, arriving in New York in 1793.

The demands on Stuart's style changed with the setting. His American customers were often unpretentious

f their ladies.

BOWDOIN COLLEGE MUSEUM OF ART, BRUNSWICK, MAINE



PENNSYLVANIA ACADEMY OF THE FINE ARTS, PHILADELPHIA



President-to-be James Madison (above left) posed for Stuart while secretary of state in 1805–07.

Stuart also painted several first ladies, including Martha Washington (like its mate, Martha's portrait was deliberately left unfinished and was never delivered to the sitter), Abigail Adams, Dolley Madison, and Louisa Adams. Dolley's portrait (above right) was painted in 1804.

people of business who demanded simple realism, not elegant idealization. "In England," said Stuart, "my efforts were compared with those of Van Dyck, Titian, and other great painters—here they are compared with the works of the Almighty!" Like many other paintings from this period of Stuart's career, the portrait of Mrs. Richard Yates (page 29) holds the mirror up to nature. Dressed in a modest costume, holding needle and thread, Mrs. Yates is neither young nor handsome. The skeptical gaze she turns on the viewer suggests that she knows much about the ways of the world. If the occasion required it, Stuart could also rise to the grand style, as he did in his monumental portrait of Chief Justice John Jay (page 28).

The several dozen portraits Stuart completed in New York were like a prologue to his most famous assignments—the life portraits of George Washington. Early in 1795, Stuart traveled to Philadelphia, then the capital city, to paint Washington for the first time. Washington was long since a favorite subject of painters. Ten years before he sat for Stuart, Washington wrote, "I am so hackneyed to the touches of the painter's pencil that I am now altogether at their beck, and sit like Patience on a monument, whilst they are delineating the lines of my face."

Irreverent and self-confident though Stuart was, he

must have been impressed when he first saw Washington's great size and majestic carriage. The painter called on the president at his residence on High Street, where the sittings were held. It is said that Stuart tried to break through Washington's reserve by remarking at the first session, "Now, sir, you must let me forget that you are General Washington and I am Stuart the painter." Washington's reply set the tone for all his dealings with Stuart: "Mr. Stuart need never feel the need of forgetting who he is, or who General Washington is."

Stuart's encounters with Washington were one of the highlights of the painter's life, and Stuart liked to embroider on the truth about their acquaintance. Still, there may be something to Stuart's story that he had seen an outburst of Washington's temper. One morning, while strolling up to the president's house for a sitting, Stuart spied a servant sweeping through an open door. Washington then appeared, grabbed the servant, and threw him across the room. When the artist presented himself, Washington told him that he had been afraid the servant would raise a cloud of dust with his broom and spoil Stuart's partially-completed painting.

This incident, or something like it, may have caused Stuart to gossip about the president with General Henry Lee, who sat for his portrait soon after Washington. Stuart's idle words got back to Washington one morning

“It’s of no use to steal Stuart’s colors. If you want

NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART, WASHINGTON, D.C.



Gilbert Stuart's subjects included most of the leading figures from Federal America. This is Chief Justice John Jay, painted in 1794.

when General Lee came over for breakfast. After complimenting Washington on the portrait, Lee remarked to the president and Mrs. Washington, “Stuart says you have a tremendous temper.” When Mrs. Washington protested, Lee continued, “But stay, my dear lady. He added that the President had it under wonderful control.” To this statement Washington replied, “He is right.”

The portrait of Washington was an immediate success and orders for copies flooded in. Stuart had captured the subject’s grandeur, dignity, and remoteness. There is also a hint of Washington’s power that caused Stuart to remark, “Had he been born in the forests . . . he would have been the fiercest man among the savage tribes.” This first life portrait has been dubbed the “Vaughan,” after a merchant who took the portrait to England for engraving.

Stuart’s chatty and familiar manner left Washington reluctant to have anything more to do with him. But Mrs. William Bingham, the wife of a close Washington asso-

ciate, persuaded the president to sit for another portrait in the spring of 1796. Stuart had no more success than before in penetrating Washington’s exterior, although the subject did perk up on a couple of occasions. Washington briefly came to life when he looked outside and saw a noble horse passing by. Stuart had bored the president with talk of politicians and generals, but the passing steed led Stuart to discuss horses and farming. Washington showed more interest in this than he had in Stuart’s discourses on history and statecraft. And when Stuart’s young son barged in on a session, the painter was surprised to see the president take the boy on his knee and talk with him.

In his second life portrait of Washington (page 23), Stuart recorded a different man than he had seen just a year before. Washington’s features were drained of vigor, and his jaw was distorted by his notoriously ill-fitting false teeth. Whether he was moved by spite or by a passion for accuracy, Stuart painted the president as he was.

to paint as he does you must steal his eyes.”

ANDREW MELLON COLLECTION, NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART, WASHINGTON, D.C.



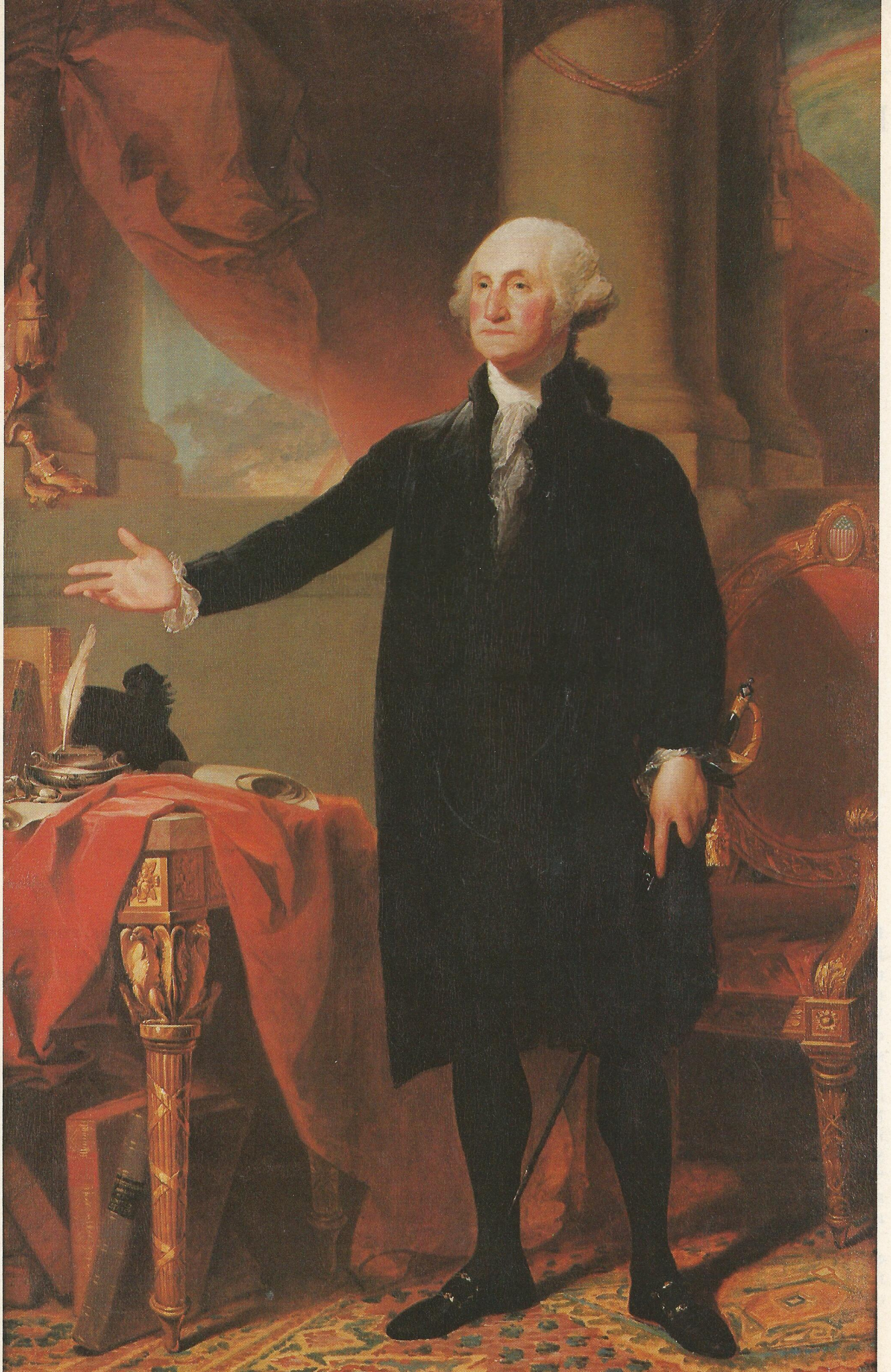
Mrs. Richard Yates, wife of a New York importer and businessman, provided Stuart with the subject for one of his most incisive portraits, in 1793–94.

Even an old and tired Washington was an awe-inspiring figure, and the second painting was even more popular than the first had been. Trying to keep up with the demand, Stuart dashed off so many copies of his second Washington portrait that he referred to them as “hundred dollar bills.” In his haste and carelessness, Stuart sometimes distorted Washington’s head and expression. The artist never finished the original of his second Washington, or its companion portrait of Martha Washington. Nor did the painter present the paintings to the Washingtons. They stayed in his possession, and in 1831 the Stuart family sold them to the Boston Atheneum. The “Atheneum” portrait is the familiar image that has served as the basis for pictures of Washington on postage stamps and currency.

The second Washington portrait was a model for several full-length portraits commissioned by Washington’s friend William Bingham. The “Bingham” portrait and closely similar “Lansdowne” portrait (page 30) show

Washington as an orator, with his right hand extended and his left hand grasping a sword. Because of a misleading remark by Stuart years later, it was long thought that Stuart had painted these full-length portraits from life. In the eighteenth-century fashion, Stuart engaged others to pose for Washington’s frame. The head and body in the portraits are in the wrong proportion, which shows that Washington could not have posed for them even if he had been so inclined.

The Washington portraits strengthened Stuart’s position as the premier American portrait painter. In the nation’s capital—first Philadelphia, then Washington—Stuart could hardly keep up with the demand for his services. Dolley Madison wrote to a friend: “Stuart is all the rage. He is almost worked to death and everyone is afraid they will be the last to be finished. He says: ‘The ladies come to me and say: *Dear Mr. Stuart, I’m afraid you must be very tired. You really must rest when my*



His brush captured the character of a new nation.

Stuart's famous "Lansdowne" full-length portrait of George Washington was painted without benefit of the original subject. Referring to one of his life portraits (page 23) for Washington's features, Stuart had acquaintances model for the president's body.

picture is done." Although his status was secure, Stuart regarded the slightest suggestion of criticism as an affront. To a man who complained about Stuart's second unsatisfactory attempt to paint his wife, Stuart exclaimed, "What damned business is this of a portrait painter. You bring him a potato and expect he will paint you a peach!"

Stuart failed to take full advantage of his fame. Often he did not complete commissions or even answer requests for his services. As John Quincy Adams said, "Mr. Stuart thinks it is the prerogative of genius to disdain the performance of his engagements." Stuart's carelessness about business brought him sorrow. For several years Stuart made payments on a farm in Pennsylvania. But he lost everything because the owner died before Stuart had taken possession, and the painter had neglected to keep a record of his payments.

More often than not, it was duplicity rather than incompetence that got Stuart into trouble. A prime example is Stuart's twenty-year deception of Thomas Jefferson. In 1800 Jefferson sat for a portrait that he paid for but never received. Without Jefferson's knowledge, Stuart apparently sold the same portrait a second time to somebody else. In 1805 Stuart's fraud put him on the spot. James Bowdoin, President Jefferson's new ambassador to Spain, commissioned portraits of Jefferson and James Madison from Stuart. Since the painter had already sold Jefferson's portrait, he no longer had a painting from which he could copy the president's image. Stuart had to talk Jefferson into granting him another sitting without letting him find out about the fate of the first portrait. Stuart convinced Jefferson to sit by claiming that he was dissatisfied with his first effort and wanted to try again. Unaware of Stuart's motives, Jefferson commissioned a small, medallion-type portrait and later presented the painter with a gold watch.

Stuart did not send the second life portrait to Jefferson. Instead, he took it along when he moved to Boston in July 1805. Stuart's reputation carried such weight that the rumors of Stuart's impending arrival caused artist John Trumbull to move to New York. There, Trumbull felt he would not need to compete with Stuart. Trumbull had guessed correctly about Stuart's popularity. His customers in Boston often waited months before Stuart could complete their portraits, or even begin them.

Although Stuart's reputation remained as high as ever, his habits were increasingly erratic. It was said that Stuart "loves a cheerful bottle and does no work in the afternoons, he is very dilatory in finishing his pictures . . . of course he is said to be poor." Stuart's manner at the easel had become a parody of its once-charming self. The

son of one client wrote with disgust about "Stuart's slovenly apparel, his strong mark of intemperance, his filthy mode of taking snuff, and the stories he told of his intimacy with distinguished men."

Even after Stuart moved to Boston, Thomas Jefferson did not forget that the painter owed him a portrait. In 1818, thirteen years after he had sat for Stuart the second time, Jefferson began to inquire about the paintings. Even if he had wished to, Stuart could not have sent Jefferson his portrait. He had long since defrauded the former president a second time by selling the portrait to James Madison. Jefferson pressed his case, and Stuart glimpsed a way out when he received an order from an art dealer named Doggett for portraits of the five presidents. Stuart traveled to Bowdoin College in Maine, where the life portraits of Jefferson and Madison had ended up, and copied the pictures. He made a copy of this copy for Doggett. Then he sent the copy he had made in Maine to Jefferson. When Jefferson's daughter detected the fraud, Stuart explained the fresh paint by insisting that he had added a few final touches before dispatching the portrait.

Stuart's final years in Boston were marked by poor health and poverty. Failing vision and trembling hands made it difficult for him to work, but occasionally his powers returned, with startling results. In 1823 John Quincy Adams commissioned a portrait of his eighty-eight-year-old father, the former president. Appropriately for a subject in the twilight of life, Stuart cast dramatic shadows over Adams' figure (page 26). In spite of the approach of death, Adams' expression still is full of life and curiosity. Less successful was an 1825 portrait of Daniel Webster; perhaps Stuart was more sympathetic to the much older Adams. Webster privately remarked of his portrait "that he should rather see the other side" of the canvas.

Stuart had just three years left to live when he painted Webster. After a long and excruciating illness, he died on July 9, 1828, at the age of seventy-two. Typically, Stuart left behind debts that far outweighed his assets. Though he was widely mourned, his family conveniently forgot his exact burial place, and did not mark the spot with so much as a simple stone.

History has been somewhat kinder to Stuart, at least in its assessment of his great gifts. The trouble Stuart brought to his friends, family, and patrons does not detract from his achievements. Because of his skill, it is less unfortunate that the camera did not yet exist in the first years of America. Almost as well as any mechanical eye could have done, Stuart's brush captured the character of a new nation. ★

Feature writer Paul Rosta is on the staff of the Los Angeles Times. He was graduated from Harvard College in 1981. For further reading he recommends Charles Merrill Mount's Gilbert Stuart, A Biography (1964).

The Hole Truth of John Cleves Symmes

by Joseph Gustaitis

The big talk in Congress when it convened in 1823 was a bit unusual. Everyone was discussing the North Pole—specifically, whether or not to send an expedition there. Even more curious, it was argued that the matter should be referred to either the Foreign Relations or Commerce committees, whose relationships to the Arctic would seem dubious.

What was going on? Congress was merely responding to a great upsurge of public interest in the hottest scientific theory of the day. It's all but forgotten now, yet 160 years ago there were people all across the country, even legislators, who were convinced that the Earth was hollow, that the interior was inhabited, that there were vast openings at the poles, and that an expedition could discover the holes and contact the inhabitants within (hence the foreign relations and commerce connection).

Where did they get such a notion? It all sprang from the inventive mind of John Cleves Symmes of Newport, Kentucky, who in 1818 had announced to the world his "Theory of Concentrick Spheres," which would henceforth be known as the theory of "Symmes' Holes."

Symmes was born in Sussex County, New Jersey, in 1780. He was a nephew of the famed pioneer of the same name who helped found the city of Cincinnati and develop the Northwest Territory. Symmes joined the army about 1804, fought a duel with a fellow officer in a Natchez garrison, and served gallantly in the War of 1812, being singled out for bravery in the battle of Lundy's Lane. After the war he retired to St. Louis, married a war widow with six children (they had four more), and began to hatch his singular theory.

Where he got his idea is a mystery. Though the notion of an inhabited hollow Earth had been previously entertained by the British astronomer Edmund Halley and the Swiss mathematician Leonhardt Euler, it is doubtful that Symmes had access to their works. Nevertheless, in 1818 he sent a circular to all of the country's institutions of higher learning, announcing that the Earth is hollow and "habitable within" and asking for "one hundred brave companions" to join him on a Siberian expedition to search for the northern aperture. He also held that the idea that the polar regions were frigid was

"altogether gratuitous." They were warm, even uncomfortably so.

Symmes' theory was based on his idea that, despite what physicists maintained, matter, when spinning, will not take the shape of a solid sphere, but will become a hollow globe, open at the axes. In fact, explained Symmes, other hollow spheres will form within the outer one, and the Earth is composed of no less than five such concentric spheres. The openings are huge, he noted. The northern one is four thousand miles across, the southern six thousand, and they are one hundred miles thick, so that a ship's captain could sail around the vast lip without even realizing it—until, of course, he stumbled across the strange country within.

Symmes traveled around the United States lecturing (he apparently was a dull speaker), raising funds, gathering disciples, and seeking support. In 1818 he moved to Newport, where John James Audubon, no less, drew his portrait. Under a pseudonym, Symmes published a fanciful description of the superior culture within the Earth. This book, modestly titled *Symzonia*, is notable as America's first utopian novel. In 1824 he settled in Hamilton, Ohio.

Needless to say, his ideas had detractors. One T.J. Matthews lectured in Cincinnati in 1824 and deftly showed that the theory of Symmes' Holes had plenty of holes of its own. Not only was the evidence as presented by Symmes strained—Saturn's rings are hardly proof of concentricity, for example—but it contradicted Sir Isaac Newton's theories in at least four major points.

Reasoned evidence, however, rarely confutes wishful thinking, and Symmes' theory might have lived on; but its author did not. After a strenuous lecture tour that took him as far as Canada, Symmes' health broke down. He returned to his old home in New Jersey and died there in May 1829. The furor subsided, and Symmes' holes were gradually forgotten.

John Cleves Symmes was sketched by John James Audubon in 1820, at about the time that his amazing theory was beginning to attract national attention.

DETAIL OF THE ORIGINAL; NEW-YORK HISTORICAL SOCIETY, NEW YORK CITY



All the hullabaloo over Symmes' theory would be no more than a bit of American ephemera were it not for the fact that it did have some substantial consequences. Interest in the polar regions having been stimulated, Americans mounted at least two ocean expeditions in the controversy's aftermath. In 1829–30 two vessels, the *Seraph* and the *Annawan*, completed one of the earliest successful explorations of the Antarctic Ocean. And in 1828 work began on what later became known as the Wilkes expedition, after its leader, navy officer Charles Wilkes. It took a decade to get this voyage underway, but in four years of exploration it sailed around Cape Horn, charted the Antarctic and the South seas, and visited the western shores of North America. The geographical and biological data which the expedition gathered was so massive that it took American scientists over thirty years to sort it all out; but in so doing, it has been said, they mastered the science of naturalism and became the equals of scientists anywhere in the world.

The other consequence was literary. For years scholars were puzzled by the deathbed words of Edgar Allan Poe, who raved "Reynolds! Reynolds! Oh, Reynolds!" Eventually it was deduced that he was talking about a Jeremiah N. Reynolds, who was a disciple of Symmes. Reynolds had lectured on Symmes' theory in Baltimore in 1837, and it is thought that Edgar's brother Henry attended and told Edgar about it. In the *Southern Literary Messenger* Poe reviewed Reynolds' appeal to Congress for a polar expedition; he used seven hundred words from the appeal in his *Arthur Gordon Pym*; and it is also believed that he read *Symzonia*. Poe was much taken with the idea of a mysterious dreamlike land beyond the seas—so much so that it apparently occupied his final delirium. Scholars tell us that this obsession found its way into works like "Dream-Land" and "Ulalume."

If that is so, then the strange theories of John Cleves Symmes need no further justification. ★

Emmy Award-winning television writer Joseph Gustaitis specializes in intellectual and cultural history.

On the Stump at Conner Prairie

*As elsewhere in America, it's election time in this Indiana village.
But Ronald Reagan and Walter Mondale aren't on the ballot.*

Like Americans everywhere, Daniel McClure, Doc Campbell, and Martha Zimmerman have been getting an earful of political speeches during recent weeks. Yes sir, every time you turn around in the small midwestern village where they live somebody is stumping for the presidential candidates, Martin Van Buren and William Henry Harrison.

Van Buren? Harrison? Of course, for it's the year 1836—always—in this living history village at Conner Prairie Pioneer Settlement, twenty miles north of Indianapolis, Indiana.

Six days a week this cluster of nineteen log cabins, barns, and simple frame buildings springs to life like some mid-American Brigadoon. Its female residents, with their long skirts swinging gracefully from side to side and neat white caps on their heads, walk down the village lane with baskets on their arms, on their way to a neighbor's cabin with some news, perhaps, or a loaf of still-warm wheat bread.

The air is filled with a soft, bucolic patchwork of country sounds: the crowing of a rooster; the rhythmic, rasp-rasp-rasp of a saw; the clang of a blacksmith's hammer. And everywhere people are talking—about the recent wedding of two of the village's young people, James Cox and Ada Noreen McClure; about the fine job Mrs. Zimmerman is doing running the Golden Eagle Inn by herself since her husband, God rest his soul, passed away; about the fancy new cast iron wood cookstove at Dr. Campbell's house.

Meanwhile, listening to all this engaging nineteenth-century gossip and wandering in and out of cabins watching the potting, weaving, and open hearth cooking are twentieth-century tourists. They have stepped through the fourth dimension to learn, in a three-dimensional way, what life must have been like in a tiny backwoods settlement just twenty years after this region of the Old Northwest Territory was carved into the State of Indiana.

From the rear of the large visitors' center at Conner Prairie, paths lead off through maple, beech, and hickory trees to the three separate areas that constitute this fifty-five-acre outdoor museum: the 1836 village, the William Conner House, and the Pioneer Adventure Center.

Prairietown, as the 1836 village is called, never actually existed. But if a village had emerged on this spot, it would have been like what has been created here, the outdoor history museum's researchers say.

The one building still standing at Conner Prairie that was present on this site in 1836 is the handsome, elaborate (by frontier standards) Federal-style brick house built by Indian trader, land owner, and politician William Conner. It, too, is open to the public, as is the third section of Conner Prairie, the Pioneer Adventure Center. In this area visitors, particularly children, can participate in candle dipping, whittling, and other activities of the early 1800s.

by Nancy Kriplen

The inscription on a tall stone marker at the entrance to the Conner Prairie grounds reads: "As far as the eye can see, this land was owned by William Conner, first settler of Hamilton county who here established a fur trading post. . . ." Though William Conner was a factual person, the lively inhabitants of the village of Prairietown are all fictional. Using historical sources (such as a demographic analysis of the 1830 census of Hamilton County), they have been carefully created to accurately represent the kinds of people who lived in this part of Indiana in that period of America's development.

Playing the roles of the village people are some fifty full and part-time Conner Prairie employees ("first-person interpreters" in technical museum terms). Many of the interpreters play more than one role. The characters they portray have strong, distinct personalities and surprisingly detailed family histories.

Take the McClures, for instance. There's Daniel, his second wife Hannah Jane, his daughter Ada Noreen (the village's recent bride), and sons Jeremy, Silas, Mark, David, and Andrew. They live in a modest white frame house with a large vegetable garden and weathered picket fence draped with blue morning glories.

In not much more time than it takes to chop up a handful of carrots and drop them into the stew she is making, Hannah Jane McClure brings the visitors standing around her work table up to date on what has been happening in her life. She was



amazed, she tells them, when Daniel up and sold their farm, and moved his family into this village. "You could have bowled me over with a feather. I never had no idea of ever being a town person," she says. "But Mr. McClure always had his heart set on being a carpenter fella and that's what he's doing now."

In his carpenter shop out back, Daniel, too, chats with visitors as he works. And since life in Prairietown follows the calendar, some of that talk recently has been about the presidential election. He is supporting Martin Van Buren to succeed Andy Jackson, because Van Buren is "a man of the people, kind of a common feller like myself," says McClure. "And he's got some experience in the job, you know; he's been vice-president. And I just kind of like the ideas that Mr. Jackson started, and I think he's the one to carry 'em on."

Van Buren supporters, however, seem to be in the minority hereabouts. And Mr. McClure, as it turns out, is fairly circumspect about being too pushy with his political beliefs. No speeches from the stump in the center of the village for him. "Well, see I'm just new in the village and I've got to kind of watch for business a little bit too, you know. I don't want

to come out too strong." This doesn't keep him from having firm opinions, however. "These Whigs have got us in an awful lot of trouble here in Indiana. They borrowed all that money, that \$13 million, to do the roads and the canals. I ain't seen no canals going by here yet, right?" (He looks over the top of his glasses and grins slyly.) "And anyway," he continues, making a point calculated to sound familiar to twentieth-century ears, "the state only takes in about \$50,000 a year in taxes, so it looks to me like somebody's going to have to raise the taxes if they're going to pay off a \$13 million loan."

Among the most outspoken, if not to say bombastic, supporters of the Whigs and their candidate is the village's justice of the peace, G. Benjamin Johnson. From the broad stump across from Mr. Whitaker's store, or from the porch of the Golden Eagle Inn, he looks down into the faces of his fellow villagers and modern-day visitors and advises them in no uncertain terms to "vote for your good friend and my good friend, that great pa-tri-ot [his voice drapes the word with oratorical red, white, and blue bunting] General Harrison!"

William Henry Harrison, Johnson

reminds his listeners, has strong Indiana connections. He was governor of the Northwest Territory and leader of the victorious troops at the battle of Tippecanoe, fought against the Indians just sixty miles north of here.

And though some of the serious issues of the campaign (like Jackson's heavy use of the veto and controversial disbanding of the national banking system) get touched upon, it is the more colorful issues that put true fire into Johnson's voice. "King Andy," he tells the crowd, has hand-picked his successor and declared him the heir apparent. "HEIR APPARENT!" He bellows out the phrase again in mock disbelief. "Why that's monarchy. Some of your fathers and grandfathers fought in the revolutionary war to get rid of monarchy."

Interestingly enough, George Hoffman, the interpreter who plays Johnson, is actually a judge in the Indiana Court of Appeals. And because the justice of the peace also usually conducts the village wedding, this makes the ceremony closer to the truth than visitors realize; if the couple had a valid license they would be legally married by the time G. Benjamin Johnson finishes the ceremony in the McClures' side yard or on the inn's front porch.

Conner Prairie is a place where the present gently touches



Women, of course, are not voting in 1836, though that does not seem to bother the ladies of Prairietown. "I don't like politics," says Kate Bend, one of the village women. "It makes my head go round and round." "It's just something women don't have to think about," agrees Mrs. Patterson, the miller's wife. "We've got enough to do without that."

And it's this sort of information—for instance, not just the *fact* that women could not vote, but how they felt about that fact—that Conner Prairie, with its emphasis on social culture, is trying to convey to visitors.

Several reasons make this emphasis on everyday life and attitudes possible, explains director of education Greg Jackson. This outdoor history museum is not tied to any specific historical event. A large amount of research material has been gathered through the years to document and provide the background for a social history interpretation.

Also, interpreters are not totally involved in what Jackson calls "process-oriented things," though they may briefly mention the coverlets they are weaving or the chair spindles they are making. "They don't have to explain how to spin or how to weave. The Pioneer Adventure Center takes care of that," Jackson says. "They can talk about what's going on in their daily lives. When you visit someone, even today," he points out, "they don't take you into the living room and say, 'This is my sofa,' unless it's a brand shiny new sofa and then they might do that. . . . They talk about other things. They talk about politics." Or as one interpreter has said, "The real interpretation of a quilting bee is the talk around the frame, not what you are doing on the frame."

The newest addition to the village, the Golden Eagle Inn, has provided a way to bring an even greater range of ideas and attitudes into the village. Travelers, such as land speculator and grain merchant Lyman Biddlecomb, can bring their more cosmopolitan experiences and opinions on stage. Mrs. Biddlecomb, for instance, who has joined her husband this time for the trip west from Maryland, is

the past—and where every year is the year 1836.

sharply critical not only of the stump-filled roads in this part of the country but also of that highly touted new form of transportation, railroads. The railway, she says huffily, might be satisfactory for shipping merchandise and animals, “but for people I don’t think it will succeed.”

Back in the Golden Eagle’s kitchen, the innkeeper, Mrs. Zimmerman, puts finishing touches on the watercress salad, beans, and biscuits she is preparing for the noon meal. Gray curls peep out from under her cap, and her pleasant round face is flushed from working near the fire. Mrs. Zimmerman is the product of a three-inch loose-leaf notebook, the “post” book of information about inns of this era and the people who might have run them and patronized them.

The information in the book was distilled by Conner Prairie’s senior historian, David Vanderstel, from the findings of a research historian hired (with a National Endowment for the Humanities grant) to locate source material about nineteenth-century midwestern inns. Almost like an historical novelist, Vanderstel conjured up the Zimmermans. They have a Pennsylvania German background, explains Vanderstel, which accurately reflects the true demographics of Hamilton County in the 1830s. The museum’s education department and the interpreters themselves put the finishing touches on the portrayals of Mrs. Zimmerman and her children.

The two story building that is now the inn was actually built in the 1830s, but as a house. It was moved to the grounds from a nearby town.

The great diversity of Prairietown’s residents is one of the major surprises to visitors, says Conner Prairie director Polly Jontz. These, the first generation of Hoosiers, came from a variety of cultural and religious backgrounds and a variety of locations “back east.”

At no time is this any more evident than during the settlement’s special candlelight Christmas season tours. The 1836 calendar is skewed just a bit for these three weeks of special evening tours, for every evening is treated as the night before Christmas. (The museum suspends its regular



PRAIRIETOWN BLACKSMITH BEN CURTIS; PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF CONNER PRAIRIE PIONEER SETTLEMENT

Here each season brings its own activities—from planting to



daytime tours for the winter months, this year beginning on November 25.)

As they walk from cabin to cabin along the lantern-lit lane (sometimes through a light dusting of early season snow), visitors learn that Christmas in this part of the country in 1836 is a far cry from the tinsel-trimmed, Dickensian holiday we often think of as an “old-fashioned Christmas.” For some families in Prairietown, Christmas is just another work day. Alex Fenton, the weaver, who lives around the corner from Dr. Campbell, even calls it a heathen celebration, what with all that drinking and rowdy carrying on.

Ben Curtis, the blacksmith, and his wife read a Christmas poem to their children. At Dr. and Mrs. Campbell's there are some seasonal decorations and elaborate food, as was common in their former hometown, Lexington, Kentucky (“The Athens of the Midwest,” Mrs. Campbell says wistfully). Mrs. Zimmerman's background puts a Pennsylvania German twist on the observance at the Golden Eagle Inn.

The year 1836 was chosen as a time frame for the village for several reasons. It was a time of transition, of relative prosperity, progress, and promise for the young state of Indiana. A well-known president, Andrew Jackson, was in office in Washington, D.C., which gives visitors a way to mentally pigeonhole the year, even if they know very little about it specifically (as is usually the case), and the national election supplies a reason for political discussions. It was also the last year when William Conner and his wife lived in the nearby big brick house, for in 1837 they moved to Noblesville four miles away, a town which Conner was helping to develop.

In the 1930s Eli Lilly, an enthusiastic student and patron of Indiana history and archeology, acquired the Conner house and surrounding lands. Eventually Lilly, grandson of the pharmaceutical company founder, gave the facility and a supporting endowment to Earlham College, a small Quaker school in Richmond, Indiana, which now operates the settle-

harvest; from simple summer pleasures to Christmas holidays.

Visiting Conner Prairie

The regular season at Conner Prairie Pioneer Settlement runs from April through the end of November (November 25 this year). During April and November the museum is open Wednesday through Saturday, 10–5; Sunday 12–5. From May through October it is also open on Tuesday. Admission is \$4.75 for adults and \$2.50 for ages six through twelve (under six free).

Allow a minimum of two hours to visit all areas. Wear comfortable shoes and warm clothing at this time of year – most buildings have only fireplace heat. If you wish to bone up ahead of time, try Edward Pessen's *Jacksonian America* or R.C. Buley's *The Old Northwest from 1815–1840*.

This year Christmas candlelight tours will run from November 30 through December 23, Wednesday through Sunday, beginning at about 5:30 P.M. Reservations are required. Admission is \$5 for adults, \$2.50 for ages six through twelve, or \$15 for a family of two adults and children under eighteen.

Conner Prairie Pioneer Settlement is located six miles north of Interstate 465 (exit 35) on the northeast side of Indianapolis, four miles south of Noblesville. For more information, contact the museum at 13400 Allisonville Road, Noblesville IN 46060 (317-773-3633).

ment through an autonomous museum program. When Lilly died, more endowment funds came to the facility, so that today income from the endowment supplies about forty percent of Conner Prairie's annual budget of \$1.6 million.

In 1964, when Conner Prairie first opened to the public, displays and restored buildings (some moved here from other sites) covered many periods in Indiana history. By late 1976 many of the buildings had been grouped into a fictional village and the focus had been narrowed to 1836—even at the Conner house, where there were also costumed, first-person interpreters. (No one actually played the role of Mr. or Mrs. Conner or their children. They were always "away visiting.")

Today, however, the guides who take visitors through the gracious dining room, the robin's-egg-blue parlor, or the upstairs rooms wear mainly contemporary clothes and do no role playing. This way, explains director Jontz, more of William Conner's complete life can be explained, a life, says Jontz, which is symbolic of "the change of this area from an Indian territory to a state and a white settlement."

William Conner spent much of his early life with the Indians, living with them and serving as an Indian agent, trader, scout, and interpreter. His first wife was Mekinges, the daughter of a Delaware chief. With their six

children they lived in a cabin near the banks of White River, a mile or so from where the present Conner house stands. In 1817 the Treaty of St. Marys sent all of the Delawares out of Indiana, to west of the Mississippi River; Mekinges and her children went with them.

Shortly afterward, Conner married a young white woman, and it was for her that he built, in 1823, the large house with walls of solid brick. It still stands on a bluff looking out over acres of rich prairie that stretch to a line of trees on the horizon, marking the distant river. This marriage produced ten more children. Conner served three terms in the Indiana legislature and died in 1855 at the age of about eighty.

Releasing the Conner House as well as the Pioneer Adventure Center from the confines of strict 1836 interpretation has also broadened the special events that Conner Prairie can put on, says Jontz. A quilt show, for instance, was able to include contemporary quilts and show changes in taste and technique through the years. "It gives us an opportunity to do activities that relate to first generation Indiana settlers but would not have happened then," she explains.

Annual attendance at Conner Prairie is currently about 150,000, with approximately twenty-eight percent being children on school tours. Several special events, includ-

ing the Symphony on the Prairie (Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra's annual summer series of outdoor concerts) also bring visitors to the grounds. Last winter a series of Hearthside Suppers were offered at the Conner House, at which small groups of twelve people received an evening of instruction in open hearth cooking and then dined on the results. Even at \$25 per person, the dinners were wildly successful: a waiting list of 1,000 already exists for the dinners to be held six nights a week next February and March.

The Hearthside Suppers are one of the few activities in which food cooked at the many open hearths in the village or in the Conner House can be enjoyed by the visitors. The rest of the time the steaming soups, the fresh apple pie, and the aromatic gingerbread are only for the interpreters. (A small restaurant is located in the visitors' center.)

There are several things that director Polly Jontz hopes visitors will take away from a visit to Conner Prairie. "I want them to see the full spectrum that we show of everyday life." This outdoor museum tries, she says, "to impart information about early Indiana in a pleasurable way so people will not be afraid of history." And the learning experience, she hopes, will continue. "I would like to arouse their interest in our heritage so that they will want to know more; I would like for them to enjoy it."

The desire to learn more—if not about Indiana's early stump-filled roads, at least about those fascinating folk who live in Prairietown—has been successfully implanted in at least one young visitor. "But we can't go yet," she wailed to her mother after spending almost all afternoon immersed in the year 1836. "I promised Mrs. Fenton I'd come back to her cabin—she's expecting me. There's a lot more good stuff she's going to tell me about what's going on in the village." ★

A native of Indianapolis, Nancy Kriplen has written several books featuring her hometown, including Keep an Eye on That Mummy, a history of the Indianapolis Children's Museum, which was published last year.

THE NIGHT OF THE ROPER

by Homer H. Hickam, Jr.

Destroyer and U-boat meet off the coast of North Carolina during the tense early days of World War II



In January 1942, the U-boats of Nazi Germany arrived off American shores and began to attack shipping with spectacular success. Soon, dozens of torpedoed commercial vessels filled with vital strategic materiel littered the Atlantic continental shelf. A grim battle erupted between the unterseeboots and an unprepared United States Navy and Coast Guard. Something had to be done or the United States was going to be knocked out of the war. The navy's initial response was to release several old World War I-era destroyers to patrol alone up and down the coast. One of these, the USS Jacob Jones (DD-130), was almost immediately torpedoed and sunk, losing most of her crew. In early March a sister ship, the USS Roper (DD-147), was ordered to replace the "Jakie" and was assigned to patrol south of Chesapeake Bay, past Cape Hatteras to Cape Fear. It was an area already called the Graveyard of the Atlantic because of its sudden, furious storms and shifting shoals, but the U-boats were busily

giving it yet another title—"Torpedo Junction." The Roper confidently steamed into the Graveyard, but soon found herself in a chaotic, desperate situation. Columns of smoke, floating bodies, thick layers of oil, and all manner of flotsam marked the U-boat successes. The Roper's captain, Lieutenant Commander Hamilton Howe, zigzagged his vessel through the area with no success, except in rescuing survivors of the torpedoed passenger ship City of New York. He soon began to understand that the Roper was as much hunted as hunter. The U-boats seemed invulnerable. One of them, the U-85, arrived off the U.S. coast on April 9 and quickly torpedoed a small steamer, then headed toward Cape Hatteras, where the hunting was supposed to be best. The Roper, whose crew was exhausted from constant alert, continued her endless search. A night in mid-April found both the Roper and the U-85 at sea and closing, completely unaware of each other.

Part II of Two Parts

It was late afternoon on April 13 when the *Roper*, patched once more, wearily stood out of Norfolk for another patrol. There had been rumors among the crew that the *Roper* would go north, perhaps to convoy duty, but that rumor, more of an unexpressed hope, was soon dashed as the destroyer turned south. During the *Roper's* ten days in port, the *Lancing*, *Kolskegg*, *San Delfino*, *Atlas*, *Tamaulipus*, and *Tennessee*, all tankers, had been sunk in the Graveyard. By 9:10 P.M. the *Roper* had cleared False Cape buoy and was zigzagging. The night was clear with virtually no wind. At 10:38 the soundman noted a contact. Howe veered the *Roper* but did not sound general quarters. He wanted to give his men as much rest as possible. He ordered one depth charge dropped and then resumed the base course. After assuring himself that everything was in order, Howe looked around the bridge and decided it was a good time to turn in. He was exhausted, and Ensign Kenneth Tebo was the officer of the deck. Howe trusted Tebo. Everyone trusted Tebo. The ship's first lieutenant, Tebo had graduated from the Naval Academy only fourteen months earlier, but his service aboard the *Roper* had been outstanding from the beginning. His attention to detail and personal integrity were his greatest assets. Howe thought that Tebo had a promising future in the navy, if he was fortunate enough to survive the war. After seeing his commander off the bridge, Tebo stared through the bridge windows into the black night. Ahead lay a void with only an occasional wisp of phosphorescence spewing over the bow to mark forward progress. The old ship droned along on a base course of 180 degrees—due south—with her lights blacked out, knifing through a flat sea.

At six minutes after midnight Ensign Mouquin saw a peculiar blip on his radar screen. The object seemed to be unusually dense, as if it were just a solid chunk of iron. At the same time, the soundman, known as "Professor" Black, heard the distant noise of rapidly turning propellers. Because the sonar/radar shack was just behind the bridge, Mouquin had only to call out to Tebo. He had something unusual, Mouquin told the deck officer, possibly a small craft of some sort but different than anything he had ever seen. Whatever it was, it was no more than 2,700 yards ahead. Black seconded Mouquin's report. Something was definitely out there. Tebo acknowledged and ordered the captain informed. Quartermaster George Hamilton immediately called Howe and advised him of the situation.

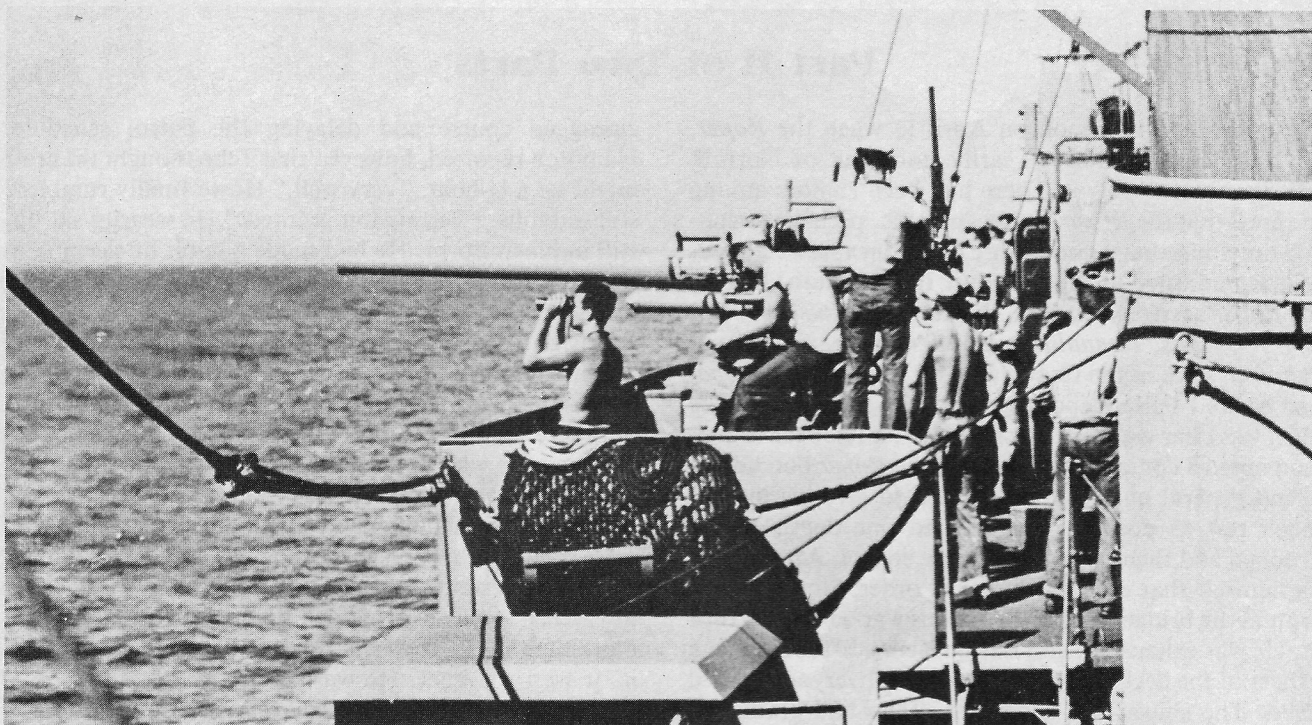
Howe had been asleep. He heard the quartermaster's words but was slow to understand their meaning. "What is our course?" he asked, and then, "What time is it?" The quartermaster answered Howe's questions and told him that Tebo wanted to investigate. At first Howe was reluctant. Even in his groggy state he was certain that the *Roper* was following either a Coast Guard vessel or a powerboat out of North Carolina on a salvage or fishing run. To follow it would mean going off the planned

zigzagged course and delaying the patrol schedule. Hamilton reported, however, that Tebo thought the craft might be a U-boat. "Very well," Howe finally rumbled, still dubious. "Permission granted." He wearily sat up, still in his uniform. He had made a habit of sleeping in it on the *Roper*. Slowly, he rose to make his way to the bridge.

Ensign Tebo did not wait for his captain. He had the permission he needed and wasted no time in using it. He turned the *Roper's* bow toward whatever it was that was out there. Tebo was not a man who ordinarily acted on hunches. He was an engineer, thoughtful and analytical in demeanor. After all the disappointments, his analysis of the situation should have brought him to the same conclusion Howe had reached. There was no U-boat out there, and certainly not one that would allow the *Roper* to catch it. Still, for this one time, Tebo was going on more than logic. It was in his gut; he could not explain it. It was a U-boat. He was certain of it!

The sea was calm. When the *Roper* pulled within 2,100 yards of the object ahead, a phosphorescent wake could be seen. Tebo, aware that German U-boats had stern torpedo tubes, ordered the *Roper* to starboard of the wake and then increased the destroyer's speed to twenty knots. He knew the *Roper* could not go much faster without losing her sonar capability. Still, the *Roper* was gradually overhauling the craft ahead. Executive Officer W.W. "Bill" Vanous quickly appeared on deck. The youthful officers respected Vanous. They admired him for his judgment and his ability to remain calm under pressure. At least one of them later recalled that he was prepared to "follow Vanous into hell" if that was where he led. Vanous had sensed a slight change in the *Roper's* routine while in his cabin. Perhaps it was the cessation of the usual careful zigzagging, or perhaps it was just the intuition of an experienced officer. Whatever it was, Vanous appeared on the bridge at a critical moment, took stock of the situation, and advised Tebo to keep pursuing the contact. Vanous thought the young ensign just might be right. Whatever was out there was definitely acting suspiciously. Commanders Norton and Howe arrived soon afterward. Howe told Tebo to keep the con. He still believed that some sort of coastal vessel was ahead, but he decided to allow Tebo to continue the chase for the experience. He planned to allow the pursuit for only a few more minutes, however, before ordering it broken off so that the *Roper* could continue south on schedule. Norton watched for a few moments, then impatiently went outside and climbed up on the flying bridge for a better view.

The wake ahead turned sharply to port and then to starboard. Whatever was out there had discovered the destroyer on its tail and was trying to lose it. The soundman, Black, yelled out that he had a good sonar contact. The craft ahead was not a shallow-draft vessel. To Tebo, that ruled out at least the North Carolina salvag-



ers, and probably the Coast Guard as well. He calmly kept the *Roper* on track while Vanous went up on the flying bridge with Norton to get a better look. Standing behind Tebo, Lieutenant Commander Howe weighed the evidence and tried to decide what to do. He did not want to order general quarters. The men were exhausted. It was beginning to look as if Tebo might be right, but it could still be another false alarm. And he did not want to accidentally fire on one of his own ships. Interpreting sonar echoes was more of an art than a science. It could still be an American vessel out there. It could be so many things . . . but a U-boat? How could it be a U-boat after all these weeks of failure? U-boats hid beneath the sea, striking out in secret and then disappearing without a trace. This thing, whatever it was, was out in the open. A U-boat? It just could not be!

Attack

A shout from the lookout on the port side interrupted Howe's thoughts. *Torpedo!* It came from ahead and sizzled past the destroyer's bow before being swallowed in the darkness. Howe, all of his doubts now erased, immediately ordered general quarters, with orders to prepare the machine guns, the 3-inch guns, the torpedoes, and the depth charge batteries for action. Blearily, the *Roper's* men climbed out of their bunks and staggered up on deck to find the destroyer surging forward, her sharp bow slashing through the waves, sheets of phosphorescence flashing astern.

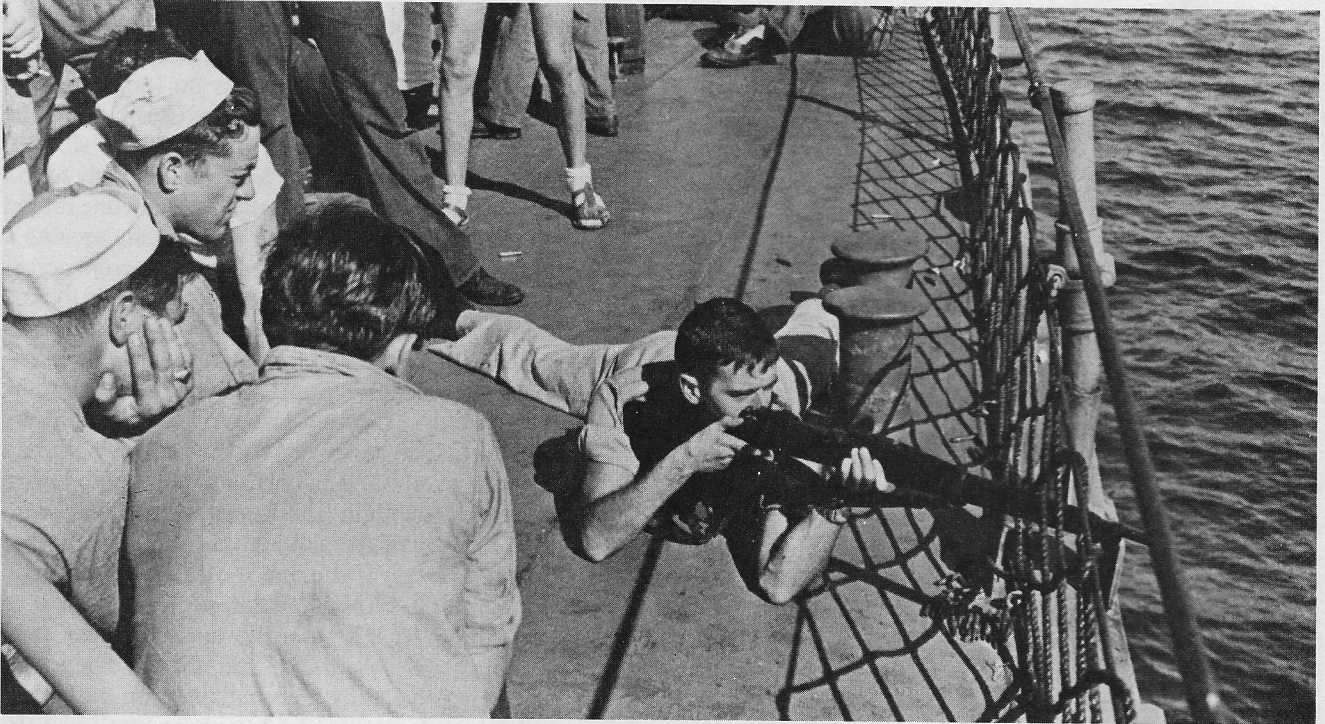
The chase continued for ten more minutes, and Tebo, still at the con, constantly kept the *Roper* to one side of the wake. Vanous ordered the 24-inch searchlight switched on and then climbed up the mainmast for a better view from the searchlight platform. The powerful beam of light swept up the churning wake until — there!

This 3-inch gun, here being fired during exercises, was the one manned by Boatswain's Mate Harry Heyman and his crew during the Roper's encounter with the U-85. It was the only 3-incher that did not jam.

—turning sharply to starboard three hundred yards ahead, a German U-boat could be seen on the surface, its conning tower and deck gun clearly illuminated. Vanous started calling directions to Tebo. Howe's first thought was to get on the radio to alert the navy and perhaps get help. He knew a B-18 bomber, codenamed "Apple," was patrolling the coast. "Jesse to Apple," he called. "Jesse to Apple." Only static answered him.

Tebo ordered the *Roper* hard to starboard after the fleeing submarine. The U-boat, however, had a much sharper turning radius than the destroyer and was coming around quicker. Tebo was not certain if the U-boat was running or turning to fight, but either way he was going to catch it. Commander Norton ordered the searchlight turned off. He thought it made the *Roper* too much of a target. One U-boat might be out there in the light, but a second might just be waiting to spring a trap. The torpedo officer, Lieutenant Winfield DeLong, on his way to the torpedoes, appeared and advised Tebo to ram the U-boat. Tebo kept his course while Vanous yelled at the gunners to fire. If he heard Norton's order to turn off the searchlight, he chose not to follow it, playing the light across the U-boat deck, which was now only two hundred yards to starboard and coming around fast.

Suddenly, several U-boat crewmen scrambled out of the conning tower and raced toward the 88-millimeter deck gun. The U-boat was turning to fight with a gun powerful enough to sink the *Roper*. Still, the destroyer's men did not fire, even though Commander Norton had climbed up onto the flying bridge and was yelling for the



guns to cut loose. Both the .50-caliber machine guns and the 3-inch guns had inexplicably jammed. Chief Jack Wright, at his duty station near the bridge, could no longer stand it. Cursing, he shoved a gunner out of his seat, jacked back the handle on a .50-caliber, and cleared it. Instantly the gun spat, and Wright swiveled it around, sending a line of tracers and bullets slashing across the U-boat deck, cutting the gun crew down. He kept up his fire, the heavy slugs banging into the side of the submarine as it continued to turn. Tebo kept the *Roper* turning with it. Soon, the U-boat had come around 180 degrees, its starboard side toward the *Roper*. Amidst a hail of .50-caliber fire, one man and then another climbed out of the con and jumped into the sea. Was the U-boat giving up? Not yet. Men were still trying to man the 88-millimeter deck gun. Only Wright's bullets kept them at bay behind the conning tower. There was not, however, another .50-caliber gun on the *Roper* firing. The men stood behind their silent weapons as if frozen in place.

The U-boat completed its turn, its port side facing the *Roper*, and then slowed and stopped, the sea streaming across its deck. Besides Chief Wright, only Harry Heyman, captain of a 3-inch gun and the man who had translated for Mrs. Mohorovicic, was ready to take advantage of the situation. All the other 3-inchers were inoperative, their excited crews having pulled the triggers before loading the shells, thus tripping the solenoids and resulting in an apparent jam or dud round.

With Vanous calling down directions and Norton imploring more of the guns to fire, Tebo slowed the *Roper* to keep from losing the U-boat in the dark. Harry Heyman and his crew now had their chance. The quartermaster called over the telephone lines to find out if any of the 3-inch guns were ready. When Heyman's turn came, he alone called out "Ready, sir!" and then calmly

Lieutenant (junior grade) Winfield DeLong, torpedo officer of the Roper, tests a rifle from the deck of the destroyer. On the night of the battle with the U-85, DeLong tried to get his torpedoes aimed and fired before the U-boat sank but did not have enough time. His view from the deck included the sight of a German crewman desperately clawing at the side of the Roper as it swept by. For a moment, eye contact was made between the two men, the German screaming for help. There was nothing DeLong could do.

ordered his men to load. Six men were on the gun crew: Heyman, a sight-setter, a pointer, and three loaders. Of the loaders, the third one had the duty of removing a shell from the magazine rack, the second of passing it on, and the first of slinging it into the gun as Heyman opened the breach. But now, when Heyman gave his command, the third loader froze. Behind the gun, a number of "snipes," Mouquin's "black gang" of machinists and boilermen, were watching the action from atop the galley. One of them, Machinist's Mate Frank Bokovich, saw the problem, raced over, grabbed a shell, and passed it on. Heyman slammed the breach closed and ordered the gun aimed. A moment later, Heyman yelled "Fire!" and the 3-inch gun spat an armored piercing shell at the U-boat. The "snipes" cheered when a flash of light and shrapnel spinning away into the darkness indicated a hit on the conning tower. Heyman quickly loaded again—the third loader now back in action. As the men continued to cheer, the gun crew fired again and then again.

In the meantime Lieutenant DeLong had been having problems. He had been ordered to fire his torpedoes, but some of his crewmen were still not on station. Moreover, the U-boat was lying just off the *Roper*'s starboard side, and DeLong's torpedoes were adjusted for curved fire.

To hit the U-boat, the torpedoes would have to be reset. Crawling under the torpedo tubes, DeLong laboriously began to hand-rotate the aiming mechanism on a torpedo. Before he could complete the task, he heard Heyman's 3-inch gun ring out again, and then there were shouts. He looked up just as the submarine began to sink, stern first. Men were still pouring out of it, jumping into the sea, and yelling and waving at the *Roper's* men. It was too late for the torpedoes. The *Roper* had sunk a U-boat!

Or had she? As the submarine disappeared into the sea in a swirl of phosphorescence, Howe ordered Tebo to move the destroyer away. He was not convinced that the U-boat had been sunk or scuttled. The British had advised their American counterparts that U-boat skippers would do anything to win, even abandon part of their crew to make their attackers think they were sunk, only to move out of the killing zone and then turn back to put a torpedo into the attacking force. The *Roper* surged ahead and then turned as Black yelled out a strong sonar contact. Howe surmised it was either another U-boat or the same one still maneuvering. There was no way to tell. The British had also said that the best defense was to attack. Howe ordered the *Roper* toward the contact. The old destroyer plunged forward, her long antenna guywire moaning and then howling in the wind like a mournful, crying banshee. Ahead, swimming survivors from the U-boat, each man in a life jacket, were yelling in both German and English. Their anguished voices drifted up to the *Roper's* stunned crew. "*Bitte* [Please]! *Bitte*!" they yelled. "*Kamerade*. Please! Help me! Save me!"

A Nightmarish Scene

The *Roper* roared ahead, plowing through groups of struggling, yelling Germans. Lieutenant DeLong, still at his torpedoes, leaned over the side and looked down at one youthful German as he swept by. "*Kamerade, bitte*!" the sailor pleaded, clawing at the side of the destroyer. In a frozen moment, American and German made contact, one looking helplessly down while the other opened his mouth in dreadful supplication. Then the moment was past; the *Roper* swept on. Dr. Johnson was also at the rail toward the bow. When he heard the yelling and saw the drowning men, he tried to release a large life ring but found the bolts painted over and frozen. He, like the other men on deck, could do nothing for the pleading Germans. Still, many of them did not want to. These were the men responsible for the death and destruction the *Roper* had witnessed for weeks. Let them drown!

If there had been confusion and hesitation on the *Roper's* bridge at the start of the engagement, now calm and clarity of purpose prevailed. The soundman had zeroed-in on the target. After the proper interval, Tebo gave the order and eleven depth charges rolled off the stern. They were set to explode at one hundred feet. The *Roper* kept going. The Germans bobbing in the destroyer's furious wake saw the charges drop into their midst and began to scream.

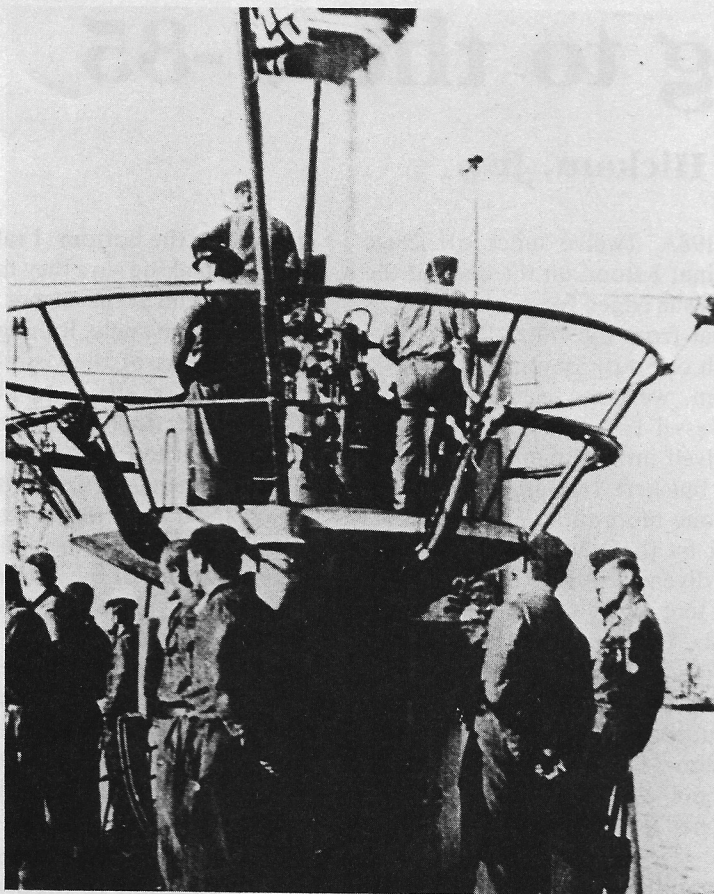
Eleven times the ocean lit up in an expanding white

circle of death that suddenly contracted and pushed up in a geyser of tremendous force. The destroyer turned to make another run, but Black was no longer getting any solid sonar returns, nor were the Germans in the water yelling for help any more. As the *Roper* slowed, the guywire stopped its moaning, and soon the only sound came from the quietly throbbing engines. Someone turned off the searchlight and the *Roper* once again became a dark apparition on a slick sea. An eerie silence crept across the black water. The officers on the bridge silently looked at one another, and then Commander Norton turned on his heel and made his way to his cabin to write a report. What was done was done. Some sense would have to be made of it. The first German U-boat had been sunk by an American surface vessel in World War II. Who had done what and when? The navy would demand to know.

For the rest of the night, the *Roper* steamed back and forth in the vicinity of the sinking. If there was another U-boat in the area, or if the one thought sunk was still somehow operating, Howe was not going to allow it to attack the *Roper*. At 1:20 A.M. Howe allowed the crew to secure from general quarters. Still not quite believing what had happened, many men remained on deck talking over the night's events. At 2:01 three small vessels, presumably Coast Guard, came into view, showing their masthead lights and playing searchlights around the horizon. At 6:07 A.M., with a crimson dawn spreading across the sky, a PBY seaplane contacted the *Roper* with a report of a large oil slick and a mass of debris. It marked the location with a smoke bomb and then circled while Howe moved the *Roper* over and dropped two obligatory depth charges. Another airplane appeared, and still another excitedly reported seeing men in the water. Howe directed the *Roper* to the area, where Dr. Johnson boarded a whaleboat with orders to bring back everyone he found, dead or alive.

Dr. Johnson and two crewmen set forth into a nightmarish scene. Dozens of German U-boat crewmen were floating in the oily water, their arms and legs spread-eagled. The Americans grimly began to pull the lifeless bodies, most of them still wearing their escape lungs, aboard. Just as with the *Jacob Jones'* crewmen, the Germans had had their internal organs ruptured when the *Roper's* depth charges had exploded beneath them. Before Dr. Johnson could finish picking up the bodies, however, the soundman on the destroyer made a sharp sonar contact. Howe still believed that another U-boat was in the area. The British he had talked to had insisted the Germans never patrolled alone. After assuring that Dr. Johnson was out of harm's way, he moved the *Roper* over the stationary contact. Large air bubbles rose steadily to the surface. Four depth charges were dropped on the site and then an orange buoy was put out to mark it.

Howe was certain this was the wreck of the U-boat that the *Roper* had sunk. To speed the recovery of the bodies, Howe ordered Tebo to man a second whaleboat. It was an ugly assignment for the young Annapolis graduate. The warming day had caused the bodies to bloat, and one of them had been hit in the face with a .50-caliber



The only known photograph of the U-85 and her crew, this picture was probably taken by a crew member while she was in her home port of St. Nazaire, France. It was found among the debris from the submarine the morning after the sinking.

round. Tebo could only thank God it was the Germans who had lost the battle and not the *Roper's* crew. In all, the two boats returned to the destroyer with twenty-nine bodies. Erich Degenkolb was among the victims, his diary tucked into a pocket. That diary along with other papers floating in the debris would confirm that the submarine was the *U-85*. Tebo searched two bodies riddled by Chief Wright's machine gun, and then allowed them to sink. Of the bodies, two were officers, but the captain of the *U-85*, Eberhard Greger, was not found.

Howe ordered the bodies stacked amidships on deck, and the crew gathered around them. They wanted souvenirs. It was an unconscious reversion to a ritual as old as war, taking a piece of the enemy to gain his strength. There was anger throughout the ship. At first it had been turned inward; men argued with each other on what could or should have been done the night before. Now, the anger turned toward the bodies. Everyone thought they deserved something from the Germans, these villains who had caused all of the death they had witnessed. To defuse the situation, Howe had canvas spread over the bodies and sent a crewman to stand guard. Soon seven airplanes and a blimp orbited above the *Roper*. A British trawler with a crew of experienced antisubmarine personnel hove into the area. Howe was more than ready to leave it all to them. He turned his destroyer toward Norfolk and quickly left the gloomy scene. The *Roper*, after standing in at Lynnhaven Road, relinquished the German bodies and their belongings to

the captain of a naval tug. When the tug pulled away, the *Roper's* crew watched in disbelief as some of the crew descended on the corpses and began to search through their pockets. Nothing was said aboard the *Roper*. They were all too exhausted to bother. They just watched.

Aftermath

The *Roper* did not stay anchored long. Ten minutes after the *U-85's* crew was transferred, Howe headed the destroyer back out to sea. On the same night the *U-85* had been sunk, another U-boat had sunk the tanker *Empire Thrush* off Cape Hatteras, North Carolina. The *Roper's* war was still on. The days and nights of unceasing calls to general quarters, the hours of tedium, the wreckage, the smoke, the bodies, and all the boredom and the horror of the Graveyard of the Atlantic would continue for the *Roper*. In fact, it continued for six more weeks until, at last, the convoy system was finally reinstituted off the Atlantic seaboard. Never again during the war would a lone American ship, out of contact with shore or any other ship, be sent to take on the U-boats. Never again would the U-boats have such success.

The war was not quite over for the crew of the *U-85*, either. Naval Intelligence received the bodies in Norfolk and took them immediately to a small hangar at the Naval Air Station. A naval medical doctor carefully examined each body to establish the cause of death and wrote up a report on each body.

Continued on page 48

Diving to the U-85

by Homer H. Hickam, Jr.

It was September 1983. Twelve miles off Nags Head, North Carolina, I stood on the deck of the dive boat *Sea Fox* as she edged forward. Beside us moved Art Lepage's boat from the Outer Banks Dive Shop in Wanchese. With our position pinpointed by a Loran navigation system, we were searching for the wreck of the *U-85*, a vessel I had been studying for over ten years. I had dived on her many times in the course of that research but here I was again, wanting to get aboard her just one more time.

The *Sea Fox*, owned by the Nags Head Pro Dive Shop, kept moving as divemaster Luci Fuller trailed out a grapnel line. Luci tentatively ran her hand along the line and then pulled. "Got it, Doogie!" she called back to the skipper, Brian "Doogie" Pledger. She had snagged the wreck 105 feet below. I went astern to help her, and together, we pulled the line in as much as the strong current would allow. Once again, I was about to follow that line to the *U-85*. What I hoped to find on her this time, I did not know. I only knew I kept wanting to come back.

Luci and I helped the other divers with their final preparations. Pledger had noted that the current was strong, and he called out to remind everybody. The *U-85* lies just inside the Gulf Stream, a tricky place to dive because currents often run one way on the surface and

another on the bottom. I talked to several of my companions, making sure they understood what they would find at the end of the anchor line. The *U-85*, I told them, is resting at an angle, leaning toward her starboard side. So, regardless of the visibility, a diver can determine whether he or she is on the bow or the stern. The 88-millimeter deck gun is forward of the conning tower, another method of orientation. Most importantly, I reminded them, the wreck is 105 feet deep—meaning it is easy for a diver to get into trouble with decompression sickness. Watching diving times is very important. The Graveyard of the Atlantic with its sudden, furious storms is no place to be caught making a long, unplanned decompression.

After the other divers were safely in the water, Luci and I started down the anchor line. At a depth of forty feet we passed through a thermocline, the water temperature dropping to about fifty-five degrees Fahrenheit. The visibility dropped as well, a swirl of cloudy

After more than forty years of submergence, the U-85 is slowly yielding to the sea. The encrusted formation being inspected by a diver (below) is the submarine's 88-millimeter deck gun. A school of fish (opposite page) hovers near the remains of the U-boat's conning tower and sky periscope.



PHOTOGRAPH BY HOMER H. HICKAM, JR.

silt sweeping in and surrounding us just as the wreck came into view. We landed on the bow, where the four torpedo tubes jutted out of the pressure hull like big drainage pipes. The forward superstructure of the *U-85* was gone. We eased aft, a school of snapper dropping over us and then soaring away as a big amberjack muscled in for a look. I pulled on a steel bar and looked down. Below me lay a German Type G7E electric torpedo, one of two spares on deck. It appeared to be in perfect condition. Another swirl of fish moved off to reveal the *U-85*'s deck gun, its barrel canted up toward the surface. Once, crewman of the *U-85* had tried to man this gun, I reminded myself, and they had failed because of one man aboard the *Roper*—Chief Jack Wright. An 88-millimeter deck gun is a powerful weapon. If the German crewmen had reached it, our dive this day might have been to the remains of a small four-stack destroyer.

Luci and I continued aft to the conning tower. The fairing that had once covered it is gone now, blasted away or carried away by the constant current. As we moved behind it, I spotted what appeared to be an impact hole. Was this the result of a hit from Harry Heyman's 3-inch gun? The angle was perfect, slightly down and on the port side. If so, it appeared the armor-piercing projectile had penetrated the U-boat's pressure hull, perhaps not enough to sink the submarine but certainly enough to convince the Germans to surrender. I studied the hole and took photographs. Perhaps the key as to why the Germans suddenly abandoned their boat and went into the water was right there. Harry Heyman was another man the *Roper* was fortunate to have aboard that night.

Luci and I moved toward the stern, past the gaping

galley hatch to the aft torpedo hatch. Just in front of it lay the stern spare torpedo, a G7A compressed-air type, its warhead fully exposed. It was probably identical to the one that Kaleun Greger had desperately fired to stop the *Roper*. A remnant of a German life raft waved beneath one of the *U-85*'s support beams. Looking at it, I could not help but be reminded of Dr. Johnson in his tiny boat as he paddled into a nightmare sea of floating dead young men.

Luci and I turned back toward the bow. On the way, I stopped briefly to enter the forward torpedo loading hatch. Inside, I found nothing but a jumble of cables, smashed instruments, tubing, and silt. The *U-85* is slowly filling with silt, and its accumulation is beginning to pull the submarine apart. Eventually she will split open, and the sea will bury her or carry her remnants away.

The anchor line awaited us, its jerking telling of the rolling sea above. Ascending, we left the *U-85* behind, and then there was the thermocline and the warmer, clearer water. Below the surface we paused to decompress. While we waited, a school of big amberjack appeared and lazily circled us once, then again. They were graceful and lovely. The *U-85*, for all of her ugliness in life, has in death become an incredibly beautiful oasis. Maybe that is why I kept coming back.

I was looking back down the anchor line at a sparkling layer of tiny fish riding the thermocline when Luci tapped me on the shoulder. Enough, she seemed to be saying. I followed her toward the sun above. Finally, for me, the night of the *Roper* was over. ★

Homer H. Hickam, Jr., a diver for NASA's Neutral Buoyancy Simulator, has been a diving instructor for twelve years. He was on the first team to explore the U-352 in 1975.



PHOTOGRAPH BY HOMER H. HICKAM, JR.

The Night of the Roper

Continued from page 45

Despite newspaper articles and the evidence that swept up on shore every day, the war off the east coast was still very much a military secret, and that included dead U-boat crewmen. Each body, still in its underclothing, was placed in a standard Veteran's Administration casket which was, in turn, sealed in a shipping box. At night, a convoy of trucks arrived, picked up the boxes, and transported them, several U.S. officers, a Catholic chaplain, a Protestant chaplain, and a firing party of twenty-four seamen to the National Cemetery in Hampton, Virginia. The convoy was met at the cemetery by a provost marshal major, eight army officers, twenty military police (to act as honorary pallbearers), and fifty-two prisoners, all from Fort Monroe, Virginia. The prisoners were there to dig and later fill in the graves. The caskets, still in their shipping boxes, were placed in the graves as the Catholic and then the Protestant chaplains read burial services. The sailors fired three volleys, taps was sounded, and the graves were filled. Today, all twenty-nine U-85 crewmen are still buried in their numbered plots at the National Cemetery in Hampton.

Although it will forever be outside the scope of any author or researcher to question the *Roper's* actions on that night, the manner in which the majority of the U-85's crew died cannot be ignored. After they had apparently surrendered and were, in fact, begging for help, the *Roper* was deliberately directed on a course through the helpless Germans and depth charges dropped in their midst. Yet several points should be considered to give perspective to the events. First, the U.S. Navy had indoctrinated its senior officers with advice from the British, who were considered experts in U-boat warfare. This advice stated basically that U-boats always traveled in "wolfpacks," that German U-boat skippers were wickedly clever, and that they would even sacrifice their crews' lives to gain a sinking. Persistent attack was the only way to defeat them. When the U-85's men jumped into the water, Howe and Norton, reflecting the doctrine of the day, believed it might be a trick, that the U-boat apparently scuttled might still be alive. And even if it was not, almost certainly another U-boat was nearby. To stop to pick up survivors was to invite suicide. It was one thing to gamble when picking up the friendly survivors of the *City of New York*, but quite another to do the same for the hated enemy. The second point to consider was the sinking of the *Jacob Jones*. The *Roper* was just as vulnerable as the "Jakie." And finally, there was the confirmed, solid contact by the *Roper's* soundman. It is probable that what he heard was the U-85 crashing into the sandy bottom 110 feet below, and the subsequent release of air bubbles. All of these factors, however, led Howe to allow Tebo to send the *Roper* forward in a dash after the nonexistent "other" U-boat—a dash and an attack that sent the destroyer straight through the U-85's terrified crew. One general from the Civil War, William Tecumseh Sherman, perhaps said it best: "It is only those who have neither fired a shot nor heard the shrieks and groans of the

wounded who cry aloud for blood, more vengeance, more desolation." Neither Norton nor Howe, nor any of the *Roper's* crew, was seeking blood, vengeance, or desolation. They sought only their own survival, and the U-85's crew died because of it.

There is no record that the United States Navy ever did anything other than praise the manner in which the *Roper* destroyed the U-85 and its crew. For the actions they took, Commander Norton and Lieutenant Commander Howe were awarded the Navy Cross. Ensign Tebo, Chief Wright, and Boatswain's Mate Heyman were given Silver Stars. Because of the strict secrecy imposed at the time, however, an announcement of these awards to the press said they were given for an "unspecified action in the North Atlantic." Yet the humane and truly heroic action of the rescue of the *City of New York* survivors went ignored.

In any case, the *Roper* had done it. The first German U-boat had been sunk by an American warship in World War II. Admiral Doenitz took note of the shifting balance and began to transfer most of his operations to the Caribbean, where, for a brief period, the U-boats enjoyed additional successes. There was never again anything such as the "American Turkey Shoot," however. During the first four months after December 7, 1941, the U-boats had sunk 198 ships in American waters, for a total of 1,150,675 tons. Yet, this war for the Atlantic coast was fought in almost complete secrecy and, even today, few Americans are aware that the Germans came close to winning that unnamed battle off the mainland. Only those Americans living on the coast were witness to the struggle as, day after day, tides of oil, wreckage, and bodies swept up on the shore. Sinkings still continued after "the night of the *Roper*," but they began to dwindle soon after, and by late summer 1942, had virtually ended.

The *Roper* continued to fight for survival during the remainder of the war. Converted to a high-speed transport in 1943, the destroyer served in the Mediterranean until 1945, when she was transferred to the Pacific theater. There, a Japanese kamikaze plane struck the *Roper* off Okinawa, killing one officer, wounding many crewmen, and causing serious damage to the superstructure. In late September, the *Roper* arrived in California for repairs, but instead was taken to the San Francisco Naval Yard and unceremoniously scrapped.

The U-85 remains at the bottom of the Graveyard of the Atlantic, a one and one-half hour boat ride off Nags Head, North Carolina. After forty-two years the hulk remains intact, with the deck gun still in place and aimed toward the surface as if in defense from an enemy long since gone. A school of amberjack have made the U-boat their home, along with several small moray eels. The U-85 is, in fact, a bastion of life on an otherwise barren, sandy plain. ★

Homer H. Hickam, Jr., is currently writing a book about the German U-boat campaign off the U.S. Atlantic Coast during World War II.

Three Hats in the Ring

Continued from page 17

Wilson and T.R. campaigned vigorously, each considering the other his major opponent. Roosevelt knew he could beat Taft but not Wilson. Thus his speeches, according to the New York *Evening Post*, were like those "Custer might have made to his scouts when he saw the Indians coming." As for the Taft-Roosevelt feud, Wilson pretended to take little notice of it, preferring, he said, the strategy of Napoleon: "Don't interfere when your enemy is destroying himself."

Despite Wilson's having called Bryan a demagogue in 1908, Bryan was willing to campaign for the Democrats. This he did, as unstintingly as he had for himself, speaking ten times a day for seven weeks. One true charge he hurled at Roosevelt was that T.R. had stolen his Bull Moose ideas from the Democrats. "So I have," Roosevelt replied. "That is quite true. I have taken every one of them except those suited for the inmates of lunatic asylums."

What little campaigning Taft did was largely aimed at Roosevelt. He called him a "fakir," a "juggler," a "green goods man," and a "gold brickman," and said that by manipulation and deceit "He is seeking to make his followers 'Holy Rollers.'" To his wife, however, Taft admitted, "Sometimes I think I might as well give up. . . . There are so many people in the country who don't like me . . . apparently on the Dr. Fell principle:

'I don't like you, Dr. Fell,
The reason why I cannot tell,
But this I know and know full well,
I don't like you, Dr. Fell.'"

Taft never liked campaigning and knew he was not good at it. The closest he ever came to complaining at having to do it, however, was when he marveled to an aide about how well McKinley had campaigned. "He was a born undertaker," said Taft.

Roosevelt fired much of his ammunition at Taft, such as when he noted several Taft badges in a crowd and observed that "they are the appropriate color of yellow." Taft's supporters replied in kind, with Harding comparing T.R. to Benedict Arnold. Taft proponent Henry Waterson characterized Roosevelt as "as sweet a gentleman as ever scuttled a ship or cut a throat."

Wilson and Roosevelt also had a few choice words for each other. To T.R.'s suggestion that Wilson should belong to his Ananias Club, named for a biblical character who was put to death for lying, Wilson countered that Roosevelt was a "self-appointed divinity" who had talked a good game of trust busting but had done nothing when he was president. "There is no man who is big enough to play Providence," added Wilson.

Even Debs joined the assault on Roosevelt, chiding him for never having spent a day in jail. Neither Roosevelt nor any of the others, continued Debs, "had ever been hit on the head by a policeman, or had ever produced enough 'to feed a gallinipper' [a large mosquito]." Because Debs had had these experiences, his reasoning went, he

could relate to working people. Wilson would later help him relive these experiences by jailing him during World War I for "treasonable acts"—criticizing Wilson's administration. Debs, however, was not deterred. He conducted his next campaign from his jail cell.

Toward the end of the campaign there was a flash of drama when an anti-third-term fanatic shot Roosevelt just before he was to deliver a speech. Physicians wanted to send him to a hospital, but T.R. refused to go. "There is a bullet in my body," he said to the astonished audience. "But it is nothing. . . . It takes more than that to kill a Bull Moose!" After the speech he was rushed to the hospital, where it was discovered that the bullet had first struck his metal spectacles case, which prevented it from going more than four inches into his chest wall, thus saving his life. Wilson and Taft both sent telegrams of admiration and sympathy, and suspended their campaigns while Roosevelt was in the hospital. In six days T.R. was back on the hustings, to the amazement of his doctors, and the campaign went on.

On October 30, toward the end of the campaign, Taft's running mate, Vice President James Sherman, died, and an arrangement had to be made in case the Taft ticket received any electoral votes. Nicholas Murray Butler, president of Columbia University, was asked to take Sherman's place on the ticket, and he agreed, "as long as there is no chance of my being elected Vice President."

The election results were 6,286,214 votes for Wilson, 4,216,020 for Roosevelt, and 3,483,922 for Taft (from *The World Almanac*, 1984). The electoral vote was a landslide victory for Wilson, who received 435 votes to 88 for Roosevelt and 8 for Taft.

"The fight is over," Roosevelt said. "We are beaten. There is only one thing to do and that is go back to the Republican party. You can't hold a party like the Progressive party together."

Taft was pleased with the outcome. He was out of the White House, which he hated, and Roosevelt was not in it. Taft, a good and honest man, will be remembered as a capable Supreme Court chief justice and as the last president to keep a cow in Washington.

Wilson, of course, went on to greatness as the nation's leader in World War I. He also brought the country an eight-hour working day, workmen's compensation, and the antichild labor law, among many other things. He was the first successful candidate to stump openly for himself. He proved that a candidate could travel, shake hands, and speak across the country, and still retain his dignity. He was also an idealist with vision, which as one historian has said, is the reason Wilson's name still appears in the speeches of Democratic candidates, while no Republican has mentioned Taft for fifty years. ★

David E. Johnson, mathematics professor at Southern College in Birmingham, Alabama, has written more than a dozen books in the engineering field. For further reading he recommends John A. Gable's The Bull Moose Years: Theodore Roosevelt and the Progressive Party (1978).

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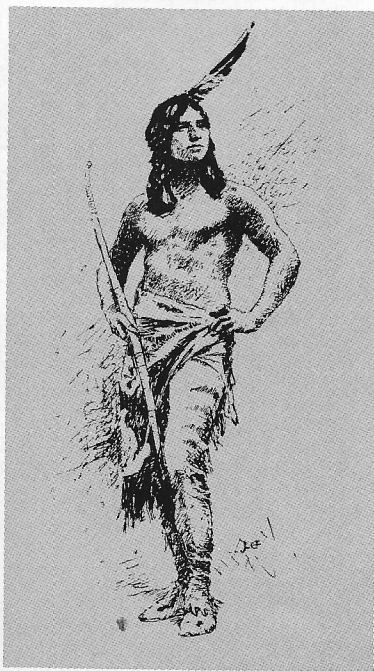
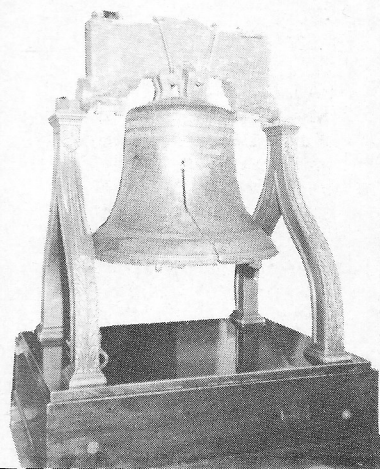
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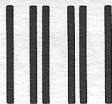
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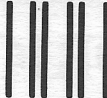
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